







Noza

from Aunt Lorie

& Uncle Jack

With every good wish

Christmas

1901







**THE  
TEMPLE**

BY  
GEORGE HERBERT

WITH NOTES  
AND INTRO-  
DUCTION BY  
EDGAR C. S. GIBSON  
D.D.  
VICAR OF LEEDS

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## Introduction

### I

THERE does not appear to be any need to attempt to write a fresh life of George Herbert as an introduction to his *Temple*. Walton's delightful biography is ever fresh, and though it scarcely comes up to some of the other inimitable "lives" by the same hand, yet modern research has succeeded in adding but little to it. But, after all, Herbert's real biography is to be found in his own works. In *A Priest to the Temple* he gives us the ideal at which he himself aimed, and has unconsciously drawn the portrait of the Rector of Bemerton; while many of his poems are as strictly autobiographical as Augustine's *Confessions*. The Poems, and the Life by Walton, mutually illustrate each other. In "Affliction" (No. 18) Herbert has sketched in brief outline his whole career, and details to illustrate it are abundantly supplied by Walton. In "The Priesthood" (No. 130), again, we see

the hopes and fears with which he approached holy orders. "The Pearl" (No. 64) tells us of his varied experiences; and many another poem reflects the struggles with ambition or the changing moods of the author, laying bare his heart in his times of depression and sadness as well as in his hours of peace and heavenly joy, and, as he himself said in his message to Nicholas Ferrar from his deathbed, furnishing a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that had passed betwixt God and his soul, before he could subject his will to that of his Master, in whose service he ultimately "found perfect freedom."<sup>1</sup> Under these circumstances it has been thought sufficient to prefix Walton's Life to this edition of *The Temple*, and to refer the reader to that and to the Poems themselves for the facts of Herbert's career.<sup>2</sup>

As a poet, Herbert is not entirely free from the faults of his age and school. The quaintness of his wit, which to many persons forms one of his greatest charms, leads him at times

<sup>1</sup> See, in addition to the poems mentioned above, those entitled "The Temper" (No. 25), "Frailtie" (No. 46), "Affliction" (No. 63), "Submission" (No. 70), "The Crosse" (133), "The Flower" (134), and "The Glance" (143).

<sup>2</sup> Besides Walton's Life, mention may be made of Barnabas Oley's "Prefatory View of the Life and Vertues of the Authour, and Excellencies of this Book,"

to indulge in fantastic conceits and grotesque images. These, however, are characteristic quite as much of the age as of the man. Herbert was born in 1593, and was therefore twenty years younger than Donne—a close personal friend of his mother and himself, a year younger than Quarles, and the senior by some twenty years or more of Richard Crashaw and Henry Vaughan. All these belong to what has been called the “Ingenious” or “Fantastic” School, the characteristics of which are the quaintness of its wit, its elaborate ingenuity, and far-fetched allusiveness.<sup>1</sup> Donne was the first to introduce this style into England, borrowing it from the Continent; and there can be no doubt that he greatly influenced Herbert’s development. But it will be found that all the writers of this school are, like Herbert, prone to indulge with more or less frequency in artificial and elaborate conceits and strange freaks of fancy. And it may be added that in adopting such forms for his poems as those given prefixed to the first edition of *A Priest to the Temple* in 1652; and of the very short notice in Aubrey’s *Brief Lives*.

There is a good (anonymous) modern life by an enthusiastic admirer of Herbert, published by the S.P.C.K. (1893); and the notice in the *Dictionary of National Biography* gives the facts well.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. W. Hales in Ward’s *English Poets*, i. 558.

to "The Altar" (No. 3) and "Easter Wings" (No. 13), where the lines are so arranged as to represent the outward form of that which is the subject of the poem, Herbert was not original, but was simply following a fashion that had been set by others before him.<sup>1</sup> But if in the form of his verse Herbert is not altogether free from the faulty tendencies of his age and school, he is nevertheless a master of his art. He often displays astonishing skill in the management of his metres and rhymes, nor is he wanting in the deeper gifts that go to make a true poet. Moreover, in the purity of his thought and the delicacy with which he treats his subjects, not only is he completely free from the defects of his age, but to him belongs the honour of having set his face from the first against the coarseness and impurity which stained so much of contemporary verse. A man of the world versed in the manners of the Court, who "knew the ways of learning, of honour, and of pleasure,"<sup>2</sup> a wit second to none in his love of social intercourse, he determined from the beginning to

<sup>1</sup> See Winterton's *Poetae Minores Græci* (Camb. 1635), where similar forms are found, one of which was copied from a book printed in 1516; and cf. G. Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* (1589), and *The Spectator*, No. 58.

<sup>2</sup> See "The Pearl," p. 111.



dedicate his poetic gift to the service of his Divine Master. It is a noble testimony that is borne to the character and influence of his verse by one whom most critics would rank as Herbert's superior in poetic gifts, but whom Herbert undoubtedly greatly influenced, Henry Vaughan the Silurist.

“The first that with any effectual success attempted a diversion of this foul and overflowing stream, was the blessed man, Mr. George Herbert, whose holy life and verse gained many pious converts, of whom I am the least, and gave the first check to a most flourishing and admired wit of his time.”<sup>1</sup> He stands, it may be fairly claimed, at the head of the line of devotional poets of the English Church. Others, indeed, had written sacred poems before him—George Wither's *Hymns and Songs of the Church* were published in 1623, ten years earlier than *The Temple*; but we know of none earlier (and indeed of few later) who could say as Herbert could, that he had formed and kept the resolution that “his poor abilities should be all and ever consecrated to God's glory.”<sup>2</sup> Coleridge is certainly right when he says that the merits of his poems “will never be

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *Silex Scintillans* (ed. 1655).

<sup>2</sup> See his letter to his mother, together with the double sonnet sent to her, in the *Life* (below, p. xlv); and cf. the poem entitled “Jordan” (No. 27).

felt without a sympathy with the mind and character of the man” ; but when he proceeds to add that the reader must also “be an affectionate and dutiful child of the Church, and from habit, conviction, or a constitutional predisposition to ceremoniousness in piety as in manners, find her forms and ordinances aids to religion, not sources of formality,”<sup>1</sup> we feel that the remark requires some qualification, for certainly some of those who, as Richard Baxter, have rejected the forms and ordinances of the Church, or who, as William Cowper, have not belonged to that school within the Church which has laid most stress upon them, have shown the keenest appreciation of Herbert’s work. The truth is that Herbert is the exclusive property of no one school of thought in the Church. Rather he furnishes a good illustration of the saying that the Evangelical and High Church parties are complementary, and not opposed to each other. Throughout, he writes as a loyal son of the Church of England. In “The British Church” (No. 83), distinct from “Her in the Valley,” and from “Her on the Hills,” he anticipates Bishop Ken’s “Communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan innova-

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to the Notes on Herbert’s Poems (Pickering).

tions, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross.”<sup>1</sup> It would be hard to find a juster statement of the Anglican position in regard to the Invocation of Saints, than that given in the poem “To all Angels and Saints” (No. 53). Together with the strong Sacramental teaching of the High Churchman, Herbert combines a firm grasp of Evangelical truth. His Eucharistic doctrine as expressed in the two poems on “Holy Communion,” especially that printed from the Williams MS.,<sup>2</sup> may have been learnt from his early friend, Bishop Andrewes, while poem after poem shows that he delighted to feel that there was something sacramental in every part of the fabric of the Church. To him, the porch and the floor and the windows, as well as the font and the altar, became outward signs of invisible grace. And yet, at the same time, no poet ever more firmly grasped or more movingly expressed the great truths on which Evangelicalism has always loved to lay stress; as the immediate access of the soul to God, the doctrine of the atonement and of free grace through the all-prevailing merits of Christ, and the supremacy of holy Scripture. Thus all sections of the Church can claim a share in Herbert. He belongs exclusively to none.

<sup>1</sup> See Plumptre's *Thomas Ken*, vol. ii. p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 248.

Of his influence upon subsequent writers, and of the value set upon his work by high authorities, there is much that might be said; but only a few remarks can be made here. Henry Vaughan's admission of his debt to him has been already cited, but, to estimate the extent of the debt, a careful study of *Silex Scintillans* side by side with *The Temple* is required. Herbert is in all probability the

Dear friend, whose holy, ever-living lines  
 Have done much good  
 To many, and have check'd my blood,  
 My fierce, wild blood, that still heaves, and  
 inclines,  
 But still is tam'd  
 By those bright fires which thee inflamed.<sup>1</sup>

And in poem after poem we may trace allusions to and reminiscences of his work.<sup>2</sup> Richard Crashaw was another of his younger contemporaries who took Herbert for his model. His own poems were entitled *Steps to the Temple*, and the lines which he wrote "On

<sup>1</sup> "The Match," *Silex Scintillans*.

<sup>2</sup> Vaughan's reminiscences of Herbert are all carefully recorded by Mr. Chambers in the Notes to his Poems in *The Muses' Library*. See also the "Introduction" to the same volume by Mr. H. C. Beeching, who frankly admits the debt which the younger poet owed to his predecessor, and fairly estimates the extent of it.

Mr. G. Herbert's book, entitled 'The Temple of Sacred Poems,' sent to a gentlewoman," form a graceful tribute which may fitly be given here.

Know you, fair, on what you look ?  
 Divinest love lies in this book :  
 Expecting fire from your fair eyes,  
 To kindle this his sacrifice.  
 When your hands untie these strings,  
 Think you've an angel by the wings ;  
 One that gladly would be nigh,  
 To wait upon each morning sigh ;  
 To flutter in the balmy air  
 Of your well perfumed prayer ;  
 These white plumes of his he'll lend you,  
 Which every day to heaven will send you :  
 To take acquaintance of each sphere,  
 And all your smooth-fac'd kindred there.  
 And though Herbert's name do owe  
 These devotions ; fairest, know  
 While I thus lay them on the shrine  
 Of your white hand, they are mine.<sup>1</sup>

In the eighteenth century, as might be expected, but little notice was taken of Herbert. Addison, in the *Spectator*, censures the forms given to the "Altar" and "Easter Wings," and gives them as examples of "false wit."<sup>2</sup> Samuel Johnson shows no sympathetic acquaintance with his work.<sup>3</sup> The number of

<sup>1</sup> Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Spectator*, No. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Palgrave's *Treasury of Sacred Song*, p. vi.

editions of *The Temple* published during the century was small compared to the number published during the previous seventy years. One exception, however, there is the general tendency to neglect Herbert's work, and that is a striking one. William Cowper in his "Memoir of his early Life," after describing the agonies which he suffered through the melancholy and "dejection of spirits" which fell upon him when studying law in London, writes as follows:—

"At length I met with Herbert's Poems; and gothic and uncouth as they were, I yet found in them a strain of piety which I could not but admire. This was the only author I had any delight in reading. I pored over him all day long; and though I found not here what I might have found—a cure for my malady, yet it never seemed so much alleviated as while I was reading him."

This testimony seems to stand quite alone, and the description of the poems as "gothic and uncouth" rather happily sums up the verdict which the taste of the eighteenth century would be inclined to pass upon the poems. With the nineteenth century a change came, and Herbert was no longer neglected. There are passages in Wordsworth's Poems which suggest an acquaintance with *The*

*Temple*; but it is surprising that John Keble does not show much trace of his influence. The solitary reference to him in his *Praelectiones*<sup>1</sup> is not altogether favourable, and it is only very occasionally that we come across a passage in *The Christian Year* which is suggestive of him.<sup>2</sup> Coleridge, however, though speaking of his work as “comparatively little known,” had a strong sense of its merits. He himself made notes upon the poems; and in *The Friend* and the *Biographia Literaria* he has borne his testimony to Herbert’s power as a poet. In the last-mentioned work he selects him as an example of what he terms “the neutral

<sup>1</sup> Keble’s *Praelectiones*, No. xxiv. p. 471.

<sup>2</sup> In his note on the poem for Palm Sunday in *The Christian Year*, Dr. Lock refers for a parallel to Herbert’s “Introit” (Palgrave, *Treasury of Sacred Song*, xxxvii.). This is the double sonnet, beginning “My God, where is that ancient heat towards Thee,” which is not found in *The Temple*, but is given in Walton’s *Life* (see below, p. xlv). A more striking correspondence of language and thought, which seems to imply indebtedness on Keble’s part, is seen when the second stanza of the poem for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity is compared with the third stanza of Herbert’s “Flower” (No. 134). It may be added that Miss Yonge speaks of the line, “Love is a present for a mighty king,” from the “Church-Porch” (see p. 18), as a favourite motto of Keble’s. See *Musings on the Christian Year*, p. xiii.

style," and describes him as "an exquisite master of this style, where the scholar and the poet supplies the material, but the perfect, well-bred gentleman the expressions and arrangement."<sup>1</sup>

In later days George Herbert's name has once more become a household word, and the charm of his writings has been widely recognised. Editions of *The Temple* have been numerous. Of these, special mention may be made of that published by Pickering in 1835, which contains Coleridge's Annotations; of Dr. Grosart's elaborate edition in the "Fuller Worthies Library" (1874), the text and greater part of the notes from which are reprinted in the Aldine Edition of *The Poetical Works of George Herbert* (Bell & Sons, 1892); and of the facsimile reprint of the first edition of *The Temple*, with a delightful introductory essay by J. H. Shorthouse (Fisher Unwin, 1882). An appreciative account and criticism of Herbert's work is also given in George MacDonald's *England's Antiphon*; and reference may well be made to a thoughtful essay by Dr. I. Gregory Smith, in the *Christian Remembrancer*, vol. xlv., containing an interesting comparison between George Herbert and John Keble.

Since, however, that which gives *The*

<sup>1</sup> *Biographia Literaria*, vol. ii. p. 101; and cf. *The Friend*, vol. i. p. 53.



*Temple* a right to a place in a "Library of Devotion" is not so much the writer's intellectual gifts as a poet, as the spirit which breathes through every line he wrote, this section may be fitly closed with two striking testimonies (belonging to an earlier age than the writings last referred to) of the devotional and spiritual value of the work.

In the touching account which Sir Thomas Herbert has given of the two last years of Charles I., we are told that when in captivity "the sacred Scripture was the book he most delighted in," but that among other devotional books, such as Bishop Andrewes' *Sermons*, and Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, he also "read often in Herbert's divine poems."<sup>1</sup> And, lastly, Richard Baxter, in the preface to his *Poetical Fragments*, says—

"I must confess after all, that, next the Scripture Poems, there are none so savoury to me as Mr. George Herbert's. I know that Cowley and others far excel Herbert in wit and accurate composure, but as Seneca takes with me above all his contemporaries, because

<sup>1</sup> Sir T. Herbert's *Memories of the Two last Years of Charles I.*, p. 61. According to Dibdin (*Library Companion*, p. 702), Charles I.'s own copy, bound in blue morocco with rich gold tooling, was once in the library of Tom Martin of Palgrave.

he speaketh things by words feelingly and seriously, like a man that is past jest, so Herbert speaks to God like a man that really believeth in God, and whose business in the world is most with God: heart-work and heaven-work make up his book.”

“Herbert speaks to God like a man that really believeth in God, and whose business in the world is most with God.” That is the real secret of the power and influence of his work.

## II

The story of the first publication of *The Temple* need not be repeated here, as it is given fully in Walton's *Life*.<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Ferrar, to whom the charge was committed, must have had a few copies struck off almost immediately upon receipt of the “little book” from Mr. Duncon, for there still exists at least one undated copy of an impression which evidently preceded the first edition issued to the public bearing the date of 1633.<sup>2</sup> As soon as even the difficulties (so graphically described by Walton)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. c.

<sup>2</sup> A facsimile of this undated copy in the Huth Library was published in 1876 by Elliot Stock, with an introduction by Dr. Grosart.

<sup>3</sup> See below, pp. c, ci.

in connection with the licensing of the book were overcome, it was published by the printers to the University of Cambridge, Thomas Buck and Roger Daniel; and so great was the demand for the volume that six editions were issued within eight years: the first and second in 1633; the third in 1634; the fourth in 1635; the fifth in 1638; and the sixth in 1641. With the last of these was bound up Christopher Harvey's "the Synagogue, or the Shadow of the Temple: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations, in imitation of Mr. George Herbert"—an imitation indeed, but a very poor one, of *The Temple*, with which, however, it was from this time forward frequently printed. The seventh edition followed in 1656; the eighth in 1660; the ninth in 1667; and the tenth, which was the earliest to contain R. White's portrait of Herbert, in 1674; and the eleventh in 1679. Later editions have been numerous, but need not be catalogued here. Already before the close of the seventeenth century the text had begun to suffer from corruption, as misprints, occasionally of a serious character, appear from 1679 onwards, some of them being commonly repeated in most editions, until Dr. Grosart corrected them for his edition in the "Fuller Worthies Library." Unfortunately, the text of this edition (repeated in the Aldine

Poets) cannot be regarded as altogether satisfactory.<sup>1</sup> It neither follows the *Editio princeps* of 1633 exactly, nor either of the two known MSS. of Herbert's Poems described below; but is formed somewhat arbitrarily by selecting one or other of the MS. readings which best commends itself to the taste of the editor, and in some cases it is not easy for the reader to determine precisely the source of the text adopted. It would have been far better had the editor followed the first edition throughout, and contented himself with giving the readings of the MSS. in his notes. Of these MSS. a brief account must now be given.

(1) The Bodleian Library, *Tanner*, 307. This is a folio volume ( $12\frac{1}{4}$  in.  $\times$   $7\frac{5}{8}$  in.), on the title-page of which is written: "The Original of Mr. George Herbert's Temple; as it was at first licensed for the presse." At the right-hand top corner of the same page stands the name of W. Sancroft,<sup>2</sup> and at the foot of the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Grosart has done so much for Herbert, and all lovers of *The Temple* are under so deep a debt of gratitude to him for his researches and discoveries, that it seems ungracious to criticise his work. But it must be confessed that, apart from the unsatisfactory character of the text as noticed above, the work suffers considerably from inaccuracies and from lack of arrangement.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Falconer Madan informs me that the hand-

page are the autograph signatures of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and his four assessors who joined with him in licensing the work :

B. Lany, Procan :<sup>1</sup>

Tho : Bainbrigg.

M. Wren.

William Beale.

Tho : Freeman.

The title of the book is given as simply *The Temple*,<sup>2</sup> without the addition of "Sacred

writing is that of the archbishop, and not of his uncle, also W. Sancroft, the Master of Emmanuel, who died in 1637, in the same year that the future archbishop took his B.A. degree. The name is of course merely a sign of ownership, and has nothing whatever to do with the licensing of the work. There is no evidence how the volume came into Sancroft's possession, but he probably secured it at some time during his residence at Emmanuel, either as Fellow or Master. The handwriting is in his developed as distinct from his early style, but must be earlier than 1677, when he was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury. The note indicating that the volume is the original of *The Temple*, "as it was first licensed for the presse," is also in Sancroft's hand.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.* Benjamin Lany, the Vice-Chancellor (*Procancelarius*), Master of Pembroke Hall.

<sup>2</sup> "Temple" was a name commonly given to a church in the seventeenth century (cf. Comber's *Companion to the Temple*). It is stated by Dr. Grosart,

Poems and Private Ejaculations” found in the printed edition. To it is due the motto from Ps. xxix. 8: “In His temple doth every man speak of His honour;” and the “Dedication” stands on the title-page, and is not given, as in the printed copies, a page to itself. The size of the volume forbids us to identify it with the “little book” given by Herbert to Mr. Duncon. It is probably a fair copy made from this by some clerk, in order to be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor for his licence. The printed edition follows it very closely, although, as will be seen by the notes, there are occasionally passages in which it diverges from both the MSS., and rests on no known authority.

(2) Dr. Williams’ Library, *Jones*, 62. In strictness of speech the Bodleian MS. is the only one known to exist of *The Temple*.

and the statement has been repeated by others, that the name “The Temple” is due to Ferrar, and that Herbert’s own title was “The Church.” This, however, appears to be a mistake: at least there is no evidence of it, for of the only two MSS. forthcoming, (1) the Bodleian gives “The Temple” as the title, and (2) the Williams MS. has no title whatever. The headline at the top of the pages, “The Church,” is only given in the central part of the volume for those poems which are so entitled in the published editions.

But this other MS., in Dr. Williams' Library, to which attention was first drawn by Dr. Grosart, is in some ways of even greater interest. It is a small volume ( $5\frac{3}{4}$  in.  $\times$   $3\frac{3}{4}$  in.), without any title, the folios being numbered 1-129. On 1-89b stand seventy-nine English poems, all but six of which are also found in *The Temple*. 100, 101 are blanks, except that on 101b is written: "The following supposed to be in Mr. Herbert's own writing:— See the Records in ye custody of ye University Orator at Cambridge." Then follow Herbert's Latin poems, *Passio Discerpta*, on 102-107a, and *Lucus*, on 107b-119a, while the remaining leaves of the book are left blank. The volume was given to the library, together with several other books, by the Rev. John Jones of Sheepall, Herts, in the last century, and on the fly-leaf is the following inscription: "Doñ Jni Jones, Cler. e museo v. cl. D. H. M. Venantodūñ. qui ob. 1730,"<sup>1</sup> beneath which Mr. Jones has added in pencil: "This book came originally from the family of Little Gidding, and was probably bound there. Q. Whether this be not the manuscript copy that was sent by Mr. Herbert a little before his

<sup>1</sup> D. H. M., the donor of the volume to Mr. Jones, has been identified with Dr. Henry Mapletoft of Huntingdon.

death to Mr. Nic. Ferrar? See Mr. Herbert's Life." As the binding closely corresponds with that of other books bound at Little Gidding, the statement in the first part of this note is evidently correct, but this MS. cannot be identified with the volume sent by Herbert to Ferrar, for it is not properly a copy of *The Temple*, as it contains rather less than one-half of the poems included in that work, while it comprises no fewer than *six* poems which have never found a place in it. That which, however, gives to the volume a very special interest, is the fact that although the English poems in it were not written out by Herbert himself, they have nevertheless been carefully corrected by his hand; and the state of the MS. shows very forcibly how true is his own line—

"I often blotted what I had begunne."<sup>1</sup>

Words are frequently changed, and there are numerous alterations and erasures. Lines and even whole stanzas are added or (more frequently) struck out by the author himself, so that we are here enabled to see him as it were at work. It is difficult to say precisely what value should be attached to the various readings, for in many instances the text found in this

<sup>1</sup> See "Jordan" (No. 75).



volume varies from that in the Bodleian MS. and printed edition. It must always be remembered that *The Temple* was published posthumously. Opportunity was wanting to the author to correct the proofs, or to give to the poems any final alterations which he might have desired to make in them. Moreover, we know nothing of the appearance and condition of the "little book" which on his deathbed he sent to Ferrar. We are not therefore in a position to say whether it had been carefully prepared for publication by Herbert himself, or whether it was merely a copy which he happened to have with him, and on which he was still working. In the published edition, as in the Bodleian MS. (which may be regarded as a fair copy of the "little book"), in one case a line is clearly missing.<sup>1</sup> There is certainly one misprint<sup>2</sup> (which the Williams MS. enables us to correct), and we may well suspect others. Thus we are scarcely justified in putting aside the readings of the Williams MS. as mere "chips of the workshop," discarded by their author. The MS. has evidently been corrected with some care, and it is quite possible that had Herbert lived to see his poems through the press, he might have preferred some,

<sup>1</sup> In "The Size" (No. 109), p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> In "Man." (No. 66), p. 114.

at least, of the readings adopted by him in this copy to those contained in the "little book." Under these circumstances it has been thought desirable in the present edition to print the text verbatim, as it is found in the *Editio princeps* of 1633, retaining the original spelling, and to add in the footnotes the various readings of both the Bodleian and Williams MSS., except those in the latter through which Herbert has struck his pen. These, as having been deliberately rejected by their author, we are justified in ignoring, and they are therefore not repeated here. The MS. was collated by Dr. Grosart for his edition of Herbert's Works, and a fresh examination has been made for the present edition, which has enabled the editor to add a few variants which had escaped Dr. Grosart's notice, and in one or two not unimportant cases to correct his misreading of the MS.<sup>1</sup>

For convenience of reference, a list of the poems contained in this MS. is here appended.

<sup>1</sup> In the notes to the poems, B. stands for the Bodleian MS., and W. for that in the Williams Library; MSS. denotes that both of these agree in giving a reading not found in the printed text. My best thanks are due to the Trustees of Dr. Williams' Library, and to their courteous Librarian, for the loan of their MS.

The names in italics are those of poems not contained in *The Temple*. The poems themselves are given below on pp. 248-254. The figures in brackets after the names of the other poems give the reference to their position in *The Temple*:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| The Dedication.                                 | Prayer (= 22. Holy Communion, Part II.). |
| The Church-Porch (1).                           | Prayer (= 39. Church-Lock and Key).      |
| Perirrhanterium (= 2. Superliminare, stanza 1). | Imploiment (28).                         |
| Superliminare (= 2. stanza 2).                  | Whitsunday (30).                         |
| The Altar (3).                                  | The H. Scriptures (29).                  |
| The Sacrifice (4).                              | <i>Love.</i>                             |
| The Thanksgiving (5).                           | Sinn (35).                               |
| The Second Thanksgiving (= 6. The Reprisal).    | Trinity Sunday (42).                     |
| The Passion (= 9. Good Friday, Part II.).       | <i>Trinity Sunday.</i>                   |
| The Passion (= 10. Redemption).                 | Repentance (19).                         |
| Good Friday (9).                                | Praise (32).                             |
| The Sinner (8).                                 | Nature (16).                             |
| Easter (12. Part I.).                           | Grace (31).                              |
| Easter (12. Part II.).                          | Mattens (34).                            |
| Easter Wings (13).                              | <i>Evensong.</i>                         |
| H. Baptisme (14).                               | Christmas-Day (56).                      |
| H. Baptisme (15).                               | Church Monuments (37).                   |
| Love (24).                                      | Frailty (46).                            |
| <i>The H. Communion.</i>                        | Content (43).                            |
| Church Musick (38).                             | Poetry (= 44. The Quid-ditie).           |
| The Christian Temper (= 25. The Temper).        | Affliction (18).                         |
| The Christian Temper (26).                      | Humility (45).                           |
| Prayer (21).                                    | Sunday (50).                             |
|   | Jordan (27).                             |
|   | Deniall (55).                            |
|   | Ungratfulnesse (57).                     |
|   | Imploiment (54).                         |
|   | A Wreath (157).                          |

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>To all Angels and Saints<br/>(53).<br/>The Pearle (64).<br/>Tentation (=65. Afflic-<br/>tion).<br/>The World (59).<br/>Col. iii. 3 (60).<br/>Faith (20).<br/>Lent (62).<br/>Man (66).<br/>Ode (=67. Antiphon).<br/>Affliction (73).<br/>Sinn (17).<br/>Charms and Knots<br/>(72).<br/>Unkindnes (68).<br/>Mortification (74).</p> | <p>The Publican (= 76.<br/>Miserie).<br/>Prayer (78).<br/>Obedience (79).<br/>Invention (=77 Jordan).<br/>Perfection: The Elixir<br/>(156).<br/><i>The Knell.</i><br/><i>Perseverance.</i><br/>Death (158).<br/>Dooms-day (159).<br/>Judgment (160).<br/>Heaven (161).<br/>Love (162).<br/>The Church Militant<br/>(163).<br/>L'Envoy (164).</p> |
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# The Life of Mr. George Herbert

## INTRODUCTION

**I**N a late retreat from the business of this world, and those many little cares with which I have too often cumbered myself, I fell into a contemplation of some of those historical passages that are recorded in sacred story: and more particularly of what had passed betwixt our blessed Saviour and that wonder of women, and sinners, and mourners, St. Mary Magdalen. I call her saint, because I did not then, nor do now consider her, as when she was possessed with seven devils; not as when her wanton eyes and dishevelled hair were designed and managed to charm and ensnare amorous beholders. But I did then, and do now consider her, as after she had expressed a visible and sacred sorrow for her sensualities; as after those eyes had wept such a flood of penitential tears as did wash, and that hair had wiped, and she most passionately kissed the feet of her's and our blessed Jesus. And I do now consider,

that because she loved much, not only much was forgiven her : but that beside that blessed blessing of having her sins pardoned, and the joy of knowing her happy condition, she also had from Him a testimony that her alabaster box of precious ointment poured on His head and feet, and that spikenard, and those spices that were by her dedicated to embalm and preserve His sacred body from putrefaction, should so far preserve her own memory, that these demonstrations of her sanctified love, and of her officious and generous gratitude, should be recorded and mentioned wheresoever His gospel should be read ; intending thereby, that as His, so her name, should also live to succeeding generations, even till time itself shall be no more.

Upon occasion of which fair example, I did lately look back, and not without some content, —at least to myself,—that I have endeavoured to deserve the love, and preserve the memory, of my two deceased friends, Dr. Donne, and Sir Henry Wotton, by declaring the several employments and various accidents of their lives. And though Mr. George Herbert—whose life I now intend to write—were to me a stranger as to his person, for I have only seen him ; yet since he was, and was worthy to be, their friend, and very many of his have been mine, I judge it may not be unacceptable to those that knew any of them in their lives, or do now know them by mine, or their own writings, to see this conjunction of them after their deaths ; without

which, many things that concerned them, and some things that concerned the age in which they lived, would be less perfect, and lost to posterity.

For these reasons I have undertaken it; and if I have prevented any abler person, I beg pardon of him and my reader.

## THE LIFE

GEORGE HERBERT was born the third day of April, in the year of our redemption 1593. The place of his birth was near to the town of Montgomery, and in that castle that did then bear the name of that town and county; that castle was then a place of state and strength, and had been successively happy in the family of the Herberts, who had long possessed it; and with it, a plentiful estate, and hearts as liberal to their poor neighbours. A family that hath been blessed with men of remarkable wisdom, and a willingness to serve their country, and, indeed, to do good to all mankind; for which they are eminent: But alas! this family did in the late rebellion suffer extremely in their estates; and the heirs of that castle saw it laid level with that earth, that was too good to bury those wretches that were the cause of it.

The father of our George was Richard Herbert, the son of Edward Herbert, Knight, the son of Richard Herbert, Knight, the son of the famous Sir Richard Herbert of Cole-

brook, in the county of Monmouth, Banneret, who was the youngest brother of that memorable William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, that lived in the reign of our King Edward the Fourth.

His mother was Magdalen Newport, the youngest daughter of Sir Richard, and sister to Sir Francis Newport of High Arkall, in the county of Salop, Knight, and grandfather of Francis Lord Newport, now Controller of his Majesty's Household. A family that for their loyalty have suffered much in their estates, and seen the ruin of that excellent structure, where their ancestors have long lived, and been memorable for their hospitality.

This mother of George Herbert—of whose person, and wisdom, and virtue, I intend to give a true account in a seasonable place—was the happy mother of seven sons and three daughters, which she would often say was Job's number, and Job's distribution; and as often bless God, that they were neither defective in their shapes, or in their reason; and very often reprove them that did not praise God for so great a blessing. I shall give the reader a short account of their names, and not say much of their fortunes.

Edward, the eldest, was first made Knight of the Bath, at that glorious time of our late Prince Henry's being installed Knight of the Garter; and after many years' useful travel, and the attainment of many languages, he was by King James sent ambassador resident to the then French king, Lewis the Thirteenth. There he continued about two years; but he



could not subject himself to a compliance with the humours of the Duke de Luisnes, who was then the great and powerful favourite at court: so that upon a complaint to our King, he was called back into England in some displeasure; but at his return he gave such an honourable account of his employment, and so justified his comportment to the Duke and all the court, that he was suddenly sent back upon the same embassy, from which he returned in the beginning of the reign of our good King Charles the First, who made him first Baron of Castle-land, and not long after of Cherbury in the county of Salop. He was a man of great learning and reason, as appears by his printed book *De Veritate*, and by his *History of the Reign of King Henry the Eighth*, and by several other tracts.

The second and third brothers were Richard and William, who ventured their lives to purchase honour in the wars of the Low Countries, and died officers in that employment. Charles was the fourth, and died fellow of New College in Oxford. Henry was the sixth, who became a menial servant to the crown in the days of King James, and hath continued to be so for fifty years; during all which time he hath been Master of the Revels; a place that requires a diligent wisdom, with which God hath blessed him. The seventh son was Thomas, who, being made captain of a ship in that fleet with which Sir Robert Mansell was sent against Algiers, did there show a

fortunate and true English valour. Of the three sisters I need not say more than that they were all married to persons of worth and plentiful fortunes; and lived to be examples of virtue, and to do good in their generations.

I now come to give my intended account of George, who was the fifth of those seven brothers.

George Herbert spent much of his childhood in a sweet content under the eye and care of his prudent mother, and the tuition of a chaplain, or tutor to him and two of his brothers, in her own family,—for she was then a widow,—where he continued till about the age of twelve years; and being at that time well instructed in the rules of grammar, he was not long after commended to the care of Dr. Neale, who was then Dean of Westminster; and by him to the care of Mr. Ireland, who was then chief master of that school; where the beauties of his pretty behaviour and wit shined, and became so eminent and lovely in this his innocent age, that he seemed to be marked out for piety, and to become the care of heaven, and of a particular good angel to guard and guide him. And thus he continued in that school, till he came to be perfect in the learned languages, and especially in the Greek tongue, in which he after proved an excellent critic.

About the age of fifteen—he being then a King's scholar—he was elected out of that school for Trinity College in Cambridge, to which place he was transplanted about the year

1608; and his prudent mother, well knowing that he might easily lose or lessen that virtue and innocence, which her advice and example had planted in his mind, did therefore procure the generous and liberal Dr. Nevil, who was then Dean of Canterbury, and master of that college, to take him into his particular care, and provide him a tutor; which he did most gladly undertake, for he knew the excellencies of his mother, and how to value such a friendship.

This was the method of his education, till he was settled in Cambridge; where we will leave him in his study, till I have paid my promised account of his excellent mother; and I will endeavour to make it short.

I have told her birth, her marriage, and the number of her children, and have given some short account of them. I shall next tell the reader that her husband died when our George was about the age of four years: I am next to tell, that she continued twelve years a widow; that she then married happily to a noble gentleman, the brother and heir of the Lord Danvers, Earl of Danby, who did highly value both her person and the most excellent endowments of her mind.

In this time of her widowhood, she being desirous to give Edward, her eldest son, such advantages of learning, and other education, as might suit his birth and fortune, and thereby make him the more fit for the service of his country, did, at his being of a fit age, remove from Montgomery Castle with him, and some

of her younger sons, to Oxford; and having entered Edward into Queen's College, and provided him a fit tutor, she commended him to his care, yet she continued there with him, and still kept him in a moderate awe of herself, and so much under her own eye, as to see and converse with him daily: but she managed this power over him without any such rigid sourness, as might make her company a torment to her child; but with such a sweetness and compliance with the recreations and pleasures of youth, as did incline him willingly to spend much of his time in the company of his dear and careful mother; which was to her great content: for she would often say, "That as our bodies take a nourishment suitable to the meat on which we feed; so our souls do as insensibly take in vice by the example or conversation with wicked company": and would therefore as often say, "That ignorance of vice was the best preservation of virtue; and that the very knowledge of wickedness was as tinder to inflame and kindle sin and keep it burning." For these reasons she endeared him to her own company, and continued with him in Oxford four years; in which time her great and harmless wit, her cheerful gravity, and her obliging behaviour, gained her an acquaintance and friendship with most of any eminent worth or learning, that were at that time in or near that university; and particularly with Mr. John Donne, who then came accidentally to that place, in this time of her being there. It was that John

Donne, who was after Dr. Donne, and Dean of St. Paul's, London: and he, at his leaving Oxford, writ and left there, in verse, a character of the beauties of her body and mind: of the first he says—

No spring nor summer-beauty has such grace,  
As I have seen in an autumnal face.

Of the latter he says—

In all her words to every hearer fit,  
You may at revels, or at council sit.

The rest of her character may be read in his printed poems, in that elegy which bears the name of "The Autumnal Beauty." For both he and she were then past the meridian of man's life.

This amity, begun at this time and place, was not an amity that polluted their souls; but an amity made up of a chain of suitable inclinations and virtues; an amity like that of St. Chrysostom's to his dear and virtuous Olympias; whom, in his letters, he calls his saint: or an amity, indeed, more like that of St. Hierome to his Paula; whose affection to her was such, that he turned poet in his old age, and then made her epitaph; wishing all his body were turned into tongues that he might declare her just praises to posterity. And this amity betwixt her and Mr. Donne was begun in a happy time for him, he being then near to the fortieth year of his age,—which was some

years before he entered into sacred orders;— a time when his necessities needed a daily supply for the support of his wife, seven children, and a family. And in this time she proved one of his most bountiful benefactors; and he as grateful an acknowledger of it. You may take one testimony for what I have said of these two worthy persons, from this following letter and sonnet:—

“MADAM,—Your favours to me are everywhere: I use them and have them. I enjoy them at London, and leave them there; and yet find them at Mitcham. Such riddles as these become things inexpressible; and such is your goodness. I was almost sorry to find your servant here this day, because I was loath to have any witness of my not coming home last night, and indeed of my coming this morning. But my not coming was excusable, because earnest business detained me; and my coming this day is by the example of your St. Mary Magdalen, who rose early upon Sunday to seek that which she loved most; and so did I. And, from her and myself, I return such thanks as are due to one, to whom we owe all the good opinion, that they, whom we need most, have of us. By this messenger, and on this good day, I commit the enclosed holy hymns and sonnets—which for the matter, not the workmanship, have yet escaped the fire—to your judgment, and to your protection too, if you think them worthy of it; and I have

appointed this inclosed sonnet to usher them to your happy hand.

“Your unworthiest servant, unless your accepting him to be so have mended him,  
 “JO. DONNE.”

MITCHAM, July 11, 1607.

*To the Lady Magdalen Herbert : Of St. Mary  
 Magdalen.*

Her of your name, whose fair inheritance  
 Bethina was, and jointure Magdalo,  
 An active faith so highly did advance,  
 That she once knew more than the Church did  
 know,  
 The Resurrection! so much good there is  
 Delivered of her, that some Fathers be  
 Loth to believe one woman could do this,  
 But think these Magdalens were two or three.  
 Increase their number, Lady, and their fame:  
 To their devotion add your innocence:  
 Take so much of th' example, as of the name;  
 The latter half; and in some recompense  
 That they did harbour Christ himself, a guest,  
 Harbour these Hymns, to his dear name address.  
 J. D.

These hymns are now lost to us; but doubtless they were such as they two now sing in heaven.

There might be more demonstrations of the friendship, and the many sacred endearments betwixt these two excellent persons,—for I have many of their letters in my hand,—and much more might be said of her great prudence and piety; but my design was not to write her's, but the life of her son; and therefore I

shall only tell my reader, that about that very day twenty years that this letter was dated, and sent her, I saw and heard this Mr. John Donne—who was then Dean of St. Paul's—weep, and preach her funeral sermon, in the Parish Church of Chelsea, near London, where she now rests in her quiet grave: and where we must now leave her, and return to her son George, whom we left in his study in Cambridge.

And in Cambridge we may find our George Herbert's behaviour to be such, that we may conclude he consecrated the first-fruits of his early age to virtue, and a serious study of learning. And that he did so, this following letter and sonnet, which were, in the first year of his going to Cambridge, sent his dear mother for a New Year's gift, may appear to be some testimony:

“. . . But I fear the heat or my late ague hath dried up those springs by which scholars say the Muses use to take up their habitations. However, I need not their help to reprove the vanity of those many love-poems that are daily writ and consecrated to Venus; nor to bewail that so few are writ that look towards God and heaven. For my own part, my meaning—dear mother—is, in these sonnets, to declare my resolution to be, that my poor abilities in poetry shall be all and ever consecrated to God's glory: and I beg you to receive this as one testimony.”

My God, where is that ancient heat towards thee,  
Wherewith whole shoals of Martyrs once did  
burn,



Besides their other flames? Doth Poetry  
 Wear Venus' livery? only serve her turn?  
 Why are not Sonnets made of thee? and lays  
 Upon thine altar burnt? Cannot thy love  
 Heighten a spirit to sound out thy praise  
 As well as any she? Cannot thy Dove  
 Outstrip their Cupid easily in flight?  
 Or, since thy ways are deep, and still the same,  
 Will not a verse run smooth that bears thy  
 name?  
 Why doth that fire, which by thy power and  
 might  
 Each breast does feel, no braver fuel choose  
 Than that, which one day, worms may chance  
 refuse?  
 Sure, Lord, there is enough in thee to dry  
 Oceans of ink; for as the Deluge did  
 Cover the Earth, so doth thy Majesty;  
 Each cloud distils thy praise, and doth forbid  
 Poets to turn it to another use.  
 Roses and lilies speak Thee; and to make  
 A pair of cheeks of them, is thy abuse.  
 Why should I women's eyes for crystal take?  
 Such poor invention burns in their low mind  
 Whose fire is wild, and doth not upward go  
 To praise, and on thee, Lord, some ink bestow.  
 Open the bones, and you shall nothing find  
 In the best face but filth; when Lord, in Thee  
 The beauty lies in the discovery.

G. H.

This was his resolution at the sending this  
 letter to his dear mother, about which time he  
 was in the seventeenth year of his age; and as  
 he grew older, so he grew in learning, and  
 more and more in favour both with God and  
 man: insomuch that, in this morning of that  
 short day of his life, he seemed to be marked  
 out for virtue, and to become the care of

Heaven; for God still kept his soul in so holy a frame, that he may, and ought to be a pattern of virtue to all posterity, and especially to his brethren of the clergy, of which the reader may expect a more exact account in what will follow.

I need not declare that he was a strict student, because, that he was so, there will be many testimonies in the future part of his life. I shall therefore only tell, that he was made Minor Fellow in the year 1609, Bachelor of Arts in the year 1611; Major Fellow of the College, March 15th, 1615: and that in that year he was also made Master of Arts, he being then in the twenty-second year of his age; during all which time, all, or the greatest diversion from his study, was the practice of music, in which he became a great master; and of which he would say, "That it did relieve his drooping spirits, compose his distracted thoughts, and raised his weary soul so far above earth, that it gave him an earnest of the joys of heaven, before he possessed them." And it may be noted, that from his first entrance into the college, the generous Dr. Nevil was a cherisher of his studies, and such a lover of his person, his behaviour, and the excellent endowments of his mind, that he took him often into his own company; by which he confirmed his native gentleness: and if during this time he expressed any error, it was, that he kept himself too much retired, and at too great a distance with all his inferiors; and his clothes seemed

to prove, that he put too great a value on his parts and parentage.

This may be some account of his disposition, and of the employment of his time till he was Master of Arts, which was anno 1615, and in the year 1619 he was chosen Orator for the University. His two precedent Orators were Sir Robert Naunton, and Sir Francis Nethersole. The first was not long after made Secretary of State, and Sir Francis, not very long after his being Orator, was made secretary to the Lady Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia. In this place of Orator our George Herbert continued eight years; and managed it with as becoming and grave a gaiety, as any had ever before or since his time. For “he had acquired great learning, and was blessed with a high fancy, a civil and sharp wit; and with a natural elegance, both in his behaviour, his tongue, and his pen.” Of all which there might be very many particular evidences; but I will limit myself to the mention of but three.

And the first notable occasion of showing his fitness for this employment of Orator was manifested in a letter to King James, upon the occasion of his sending that university his book called *Basilicon Doron*; and their Orator was to acknowledge this great honour, and return their gratitude to his Majesty for such a condescension; at the close of which letter he writ—

*Quid Vaticanam Bodleianamque objicis, hospes!  
Unicus est nobis Bibliotheca Liber.*

This letter was writ in such excellent Latin, was so full of conceits, and all the expressions so suited to the genius of the King, that he inquired the Orator's name, and then asked William, Earl of Pembroke, if he knew him? whose answer was, "That he knew him very well, and that he was his kinsman; but he loved him more for his learning and virtue, than for that he was of his name and family." At which answer the King smiled, and asked the Earl leave that he might love him too, for he took him to be the jewel of that university.

The next occasion he had and took to show his great abilities, was, with them, to show also his great affection to that Church in which he received his baptism, and of which he professed himself a member; and the occasion was this: There was one Andrew Melvin, a minister of the Scotch Church, and Rector of St. Andrews; who, by a long and constant converse with a discontented part of that clergy which opposed episcopacy, became at last to be a chief leader of that faction; and had proudly appeared to be so to King James, when he was but King of that nation, who, the second year after his coronation in England, convened a part of the bishops, and other learned divines of his Church, to attend him at Hampton Court, in order to a friendly conference with some dissenting brethren, both of this and the Church of Scotland: of which Scotch party Andrew Melvin was one; and he being a man of learning, and inclined to satirical poetry, had scattered many malicious,

bitter verses against our Liturgy, our ceremonies, and our Church government; which were by some of that party so magnified for the wit, that they were therefore brought into Westminster School, where Mr. George Herbert, then, and often after, made such answers to them, and such reflections on him and his Kirk, as might unbeguile any man that was not too deeply pre-engaged in such a quarrel. But to return to Mr. Melvin at Hampton Court conference; he there appeared to be a man of an unruly wit, of a strange confidence, of so furious a zeal, and of so ungoverned passions, that his insolence to the King, and others at this conference, lost him both his Rectorship of St. Andrews and his liberty too; for his former verses, and his present reproaches there used against the Church and State, caused him to be committed prisoner to the Tower of London; where he remained very angry for three years. At which time of his commitment, he found the Lady Arabella an innocent prisoner there; and he pleased himself much in sending, the next day after his commitment, these two verses to the good lady; which I will underwrite, because they may give the reader a taste of his others, which were like these:

*Causa tibi mecum est communis, carceris, Arabella, tibi causa est, Araque sacra mihi.*

I shall not trouble my reader with an account of his enlargement from that prison, or his death;

but tell him Mr. Herbert's verses were thought so worthy to be preserved, that Dr. Duport, the learned Dean of Peterborough, hath lately collected and caused many of them to be printed, as an honourable memorial of his friend Mr. George Herbert, and the cause he undertook.

And in order to my third and last observation of his great abilities, it will be needful to declare, that about this time King James came very often to hunt at Newmarket and Royston, and was almost as often invited to Cambridge, where his entertainment was comedies, suited to his pleasant humour; and where Mr. George Herbert was to welcome him with gratulations, and the applauses of an Orator; which he always performed so well, that he still grew more into the King's favour, insomuch that he had a particular appointment to attend his Majesty at Royston; where, after a discourse with him, his Majesty declared to his kinsman, the Earl of Pembroke, that he found the Orator's learning and wisdom much above his age or wit. The year following, the King appointed to end his progress at Cambridge, and to stay there certain days; at which time he was attended by the great secretary of nature and all learning, Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, and by the ever-memorable and learned Dr. Andrews, Bishop of Winchester, both which did at that time begin a desired friendship with our Orator. Upon whom, the first put such a value on his judgment, that he usually desired his approbation

before he would expose any of his books to be printed; and thought him so worthy of his friendship, that having translated many of the Prophet David's Psalms into English verse, he made George Herbert his patron, by a public dedication of them to him, as the best judge of divine poetry. And for the learned Bishop, it is observable, that at that time there fell to be a modest debate betwixt them two about predestination, and sanctity of life; of both of which the Orator did, not long after, send the Bishop some safe and useful aphorisms, in a long letter, written in Greek; which letter was so remarkable for the language and reason of it, that, after the reading of it, the Bishop put it into his bosom, and did often show it to many scholars, both of this and foreign nations; but did always return it back to the place where he first lodged it, and continued it so near his heart till the last day of his life.

To this I might add the long and entire friendship betwixt him and Sir Henry Wotton, and Dr. Donne; but I have promised to contract myself, and shall therefore only add one testimony to what is also mentioned in the Life of Dr. Donne; namely, that a little before his death he caused many seals to be made, and in them to be engraven the figure of Christ, crucified on an anchor,—the emblem of hope,—and of which Dr. Donne would often say, "*Crux mihi anchora.*"—These seals he gave or sent to most of those friends on which he put a value; and, at Mr. Herbert's death, these

verses were found wrapt up with that seal, which was by the Doctor given to him :

When my dear friend could write no more,  
He gave this Seal and so gave o'er.

When winds and waves rise highest I am sure,  
This Anchor keeps my faith, that, me secure.

At this time of being Orator, he had learned to understand the Italian, Spanish, and French tongues very perfectly: hoping, that as his predecessors, so he might in time attain the place of a Secretary of State, he being at that time very high in the King's favour, and not meanly valued and loved by the most eminent and most powerful of the court nobility. This, and the love of a court conversation, mixed with a laudable ambition to be something more than he then was, drew him often from Cambridge, to attend the King wheresoever the court was, who then gave him a sinecure, which fell into his Majesty's disposal, I think, by the death of the Bishop of St. Asaph. It was the same that Queen Elizabeth had formerly given to her favourite Sir Philip Sidney, and valued to be worth an hundred and twenty pounds per annum. With this, and his annuity, and the advantage of his college, and of his Oratorship, he enjoyed his genteel humour for clothes, and court-like company, and seldom looked towards Cambridge, unless the King were there, but then he never failed; and, at other times, left the manage of his Orator's



place to his learned friend, Mr. Herbert Thorndike, who is now Prebend of Westminster.

I may not omit to tell, that he had often designed to leave the university, and decline all study, which he thought did impair his health; for he had a body apt to a consumption, and to fevers, and other infirmities, which he judged were increased by his studies; for he would often say, "He had too thoughtful a wit; a wit like a penknife in too narrow a sheath, too sharp for his body." But his mother would by no means allow him to leave the university, or to travel; and though he inclined very much to both, yet he would by no means satisfy his own desires at so dear a rate, as to prove an undutiful son to so affectionate a mother; but did always submit to her wisdom. And what I have now said may partly appear in a copy of verses in his printed poems; 'tis one of those that bear the title of "Affliction"; and it appears to be a pious reflection on God's providence, and some passages of his life, in which he says—

Whereas my birth and spirit rather took  
 The way that takes the town:  
 Thou didst betray me to a lingering book,  
 And wrap me in a gown:  
 I was entangled in a world of strife,  
 Before I had the power to change my life.

Yet, for I threaten'd oft the siege to raise,  
 Not simpering all mine age;  
 Thou often didst with academic praise  
 Melt and dissolve my rage:

I took the sweeten'd pill, till I came where  
I could not go away, nor persevere.

Yet, lest perchance I should too happy be  
    In my unhappiness,  
Turning my purge to food, thou throwest me  
    Into more sicknesses.

Thus doth thy power cross-bias me, not making  
Thine own gifts good, yet me from my ways  
    taking.

Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me  
    None of my books will show.  
I read, and sigh, and wish I were a tree,  
    For then sure I should grow  
To fruit or shade, at least some bird would trust  
Her household with me, and I would be just.

Yet, though thou troublest me, I must be meek,  
    In weakness must be stout,  
Well, I will change my service, and go seek  
    Some other master out;  
Ah, my dear God! though I am clean forgot,  
Let me not love thee, if I love thee not.

G. H.

In this time of Mr. Herbert's attendance and expectation of some good occasion to remove from Cambridge to court, God, in whom there is an unseen chain of causes, did in a short time put an end to the lives of two of his most obliging and most powerful friends, Lodowick, Duke of Richmond, and James, Marquis of Hamilton; and not long after him King James died also, and with them all Mr. Herbert's court hopes: so that he presently betook himself to a retreat from London, to a friend in Kent, where he lived very privately,

and was such a lover of solitariness, as was judged to impair his health, more than his study had done. In this time of retirement he had many conflicts with himself, whether he should return to the painted pleasures of a court life, or betake himself to a study of divinity, and enter into sacred orders, to which his mother had often persuaded him. These were such conflicts as they only can know that have endured them; for ambitious desires, and the outward glory of this world, are not easily laid aside; but at last God inclined him to put on a resolution to serve at His altar.

He did, at his return to London, acquaint a court-friend with his resolution to enter into sacred orders, who persuaded him to alter it, as too mean an employment, and too much below his birth, and the excellent abilities and endowments of his mind. To whom he replied, "It hath been formerly judged that the domestic servants of the King of Heaven should be of the noblest families on earth. And though the iniquity of the late times have made clergymen meanly valued, and the sacred name of priest contemptible; yet I will labour to make it honourable, by consecrating all my learning, and all my poor abilities to advance the glory of that God that gave them; knowing that I can never do too much for Him, that hath done so much for me, as to make me a Christian. And I will labour to be like my Saviour, by making humility lovely in the eyes of all men, and by following the merciful and meek example of my dear Jesus."

This was then his resolution; and the God of constancy, who intended him for a great example of virtue, continued him in it, for within that year he was made deacon, but the day when, or by whom, I cannot learn; but that he was about that time made deacon is most certain; for I find by the records of Lincoln, that he was made Prebend of Layton Ecclesia, in the diocese of Lincoln, July 15th, 1626, and that this Prebend was given him by John, then Lord Bishop of that see. And now he had a fit occasion to show that piety and bounty that was derived from his generous mother, and his other memorable ancestors, and the occasion was this.

This Layton Ecclesia is a village near to Spalden, in the county of Huntingdon, and the greatest part of the parish church was fallen down, and that of it which stood was so decayed, so little, and so useless, that the parishioners could not meet to perform their duty to God in public prayer and praises; and thus it had been for almost twenty years, in which time there had been some faint endeavours for a public collection to enable the parishioners to rebuild it; but with no success, till Mr. Herbert undertook it; and he, by his own, and the contribution of many of his kindred, and other noble friends, undertook the re-edification of it; and made it so much his whole business, that he became restless till he saw it finished as it now stands; being for the workmanship, a costly mosaic; for the form, an exact cross; and for the decency

and beauty, I am assured, it is the most remarkable parish church that this nation affords. He lived to see it so wainscotted, as to be exceeded by none, and, by his order, the reading pew and pulpit were a little distant from each other, and both of an equal height; for he would often say, "They should neither have a precedency or priority of the other; but that prayer and preaching, being equally useful, might agree like brethren, and having an equal honour and estimation."

Before I proceed further, I must look back to the time of Mr. Herbert's being made Prebend, and tell the reader, that not long after, his mother being informed of his intentions to rebuild that church, and apprehending the great trouble and charge that he was like to draw upon himself, his relations and friends, before it could be finished, sent for him from London to Chelsea,—where she then dwelt,—and at his coming, said, "George, I sent for you, to persuade you to commit simony, by giving your patron as good a gift as he has given to you; namely, that you give him back his prebend; for, George, it is not for your weak body, and empty purse, to undertake to build churches." Of which, he desired he might have a day's time to consider, and then make her an answer. And at his return to her the next day, when he had first desired her blessing, and she given it him, his next request was, "That she would, at the age of thirty-three years, allow him to become an undutiful son; for he had made a

vow to God, that, if he were able, he would rebuild that church." And then showed her such reasons for his resolution, that she presently subscribed to be one of his benefactors; and undertook to solicit William, Earl of Pembroke, to become another, who subscribed for fifty pounds; and not long after, by a witty and persuasive letter from Mr. Herbert, made it fifty pounds more. And in this nomination of some of his benefactors, James, Duke of Lenox, and his brother, Sir Henry Herbert, ought to be remembered; as also the bounty of Mr. Nicholas Farrer, and Mr. Arthur Woodnot: the one a gentleman in the neighbourhood of Layton, and the other a goldsmith in Foster Lane, London, ought not to be forgotten: for the memory of such men ought to outlive their lives. Of Mr. Farrer I shall hereafter give an account in a more seasonable place; but before I proceed further, I will give this short account of Mr. Arthur Woodnot.

He was a man, that had considered overgrown estates do often require more care and watchfulness to preserve than get them, and considered that there be many discontents that riches cure not; and did therefore set limits to himself, as to desire of wealth. And having attained so much as to be able to show some mercy to the poor, and preserve a competence for himself, he dedicated the remaining part of his life to the service of God, and to be useful to his friends; and he proved to be so to Mr. Herbert; for besides his own bounty, he collected and

returned most of the money that was paid for the rebuilding of that church; he kept all the account of the charges, and would often go down to state them, and see all the workmen paid. When I have said that this good man was a useful friend to Mr. Herbert's father, and to his mother, and continued to be so to him, till he closed his eyes on his deathbed, I will forbear to say more, till I have the next fair occasion to mention the holy friendship that was betwixt him and Mr. Herbert. From whom Mr. Woodnot carried to his mother this following letter, and delivered it to her in a sickness, which was not long before that which proved to be her last:—

*A Letter of MR. GEORGE HERBERT to his mother, in her sickness.*

“MADAM,—At my last parting from you, I was the better content, because I was in hope I should myself carry all sickness out of your family: but since I know I did not, and that your share continues, or rather increaseth, I wish earnestly that I were again with you; and would quickly make good my wish, but that my employment does fix me here, it being now but a month to our commencement: wherein my absence, by how much it naturally augmenteth suspicion, by so much shall it make my prayers the more constant and the more earnest for you to the God of all consolation. In the meantime, I beseech you to be cheerful, and comfort your-

self in the God of all comfort, who is not willing to behold any sorrow but for sin.—What hath affliction grievous in it more than for a moment? or why should our afflictions here have so much power or boldness as to oppose the hope of our joys hereafter? Madam, as the earth is but a point in respect of the heavens, so are earthly troubles compared to heavenly joys; therefore, if either age or sickness lead you to those joys, consider what advantage you have over youth and health, who are now so near those true comforts. Your last letter gave me earthly preferment, and I hope kept heavenly for yourself: but would you divide and choose too? Our college customs allow not that: and I should account myself most happy, if I might change with you; for I have always observed the thread of life to be like other threads or skeins of silk, full of snarles and incumbrances. Happy is he, whose bottom is wound up, and laid ready for work in the New Jerusalem. For myself, dear mother, I always feared sickness more than death, because sickness hath made me unable to perform those offices for which I came into the world, and must yet be kept in it; but you are freed from that fear, who have already abundantly discharged that part, having both ordered your family and so brought up your children, that they have attained to the years of discretion, and competent maintenance. So that now, if they do not well, the fault cannot be charged on you, whose example and care of them will justify you both to the world and



your own conscience; insomuch that, whether you turn your thoughts on the life past, or on the joys that are to come, you have strong preservatives against all disquiet. And for temporal afflictions, I beseech you consider, all that can happen to you are either afflictions of estate, or body, or mind. For those of estate, of what poor regard ought they to be? since, if we had riches, we are commanded to give them away: so that the best use of them is, having, not to have them. But perhaps, being above the common people, our credit and estimation calls on us to live in a more splendid fashion: but, O God! how easily is that answered, when we consider that the blessings in the holy scripture are never given to the rich, but to the poor. I never find 'Blessed be the rich,' or 'Blessed be the noble'; but 'Blessed be the meek,' and 'Blessed be the poor,' and 'Blessed be the mourners, for they shall be comforted.' And yet, O God! most carry themselves so as if they not only not desired, but even feared to be blessed. And for afflictions of the body, dear madam, remember the holy martyrs of God, how they have been burned by thousands, and have endured such other tortures, as the very mention of them might beget amazement: but their fiery trials have had an end; and yours—which, praised be God, are less—are not like to continue long. I beseech you, let such thoughts as these moderate your present fear and sorrow: and know that if any of yours should prove a Goliath-like trouble, yet you may say

with David, 'That God, who hath delivered me out of the paws of the lion and bear, will also deliver me out of the hands of this uncircumcised Philistine.' Lastly, for those afflictions of the soul; consider that God intends that to be as a sacred temple for himself to dwell in, and will not allow any room there for such an inmate as grief; or allow that any sadness shall be his competitor. And, above all, if any care of future things molest you, remember those admirable words of the Psalmist: 'Cast thy care on the Lord, and he shall nourish thee.' To which join that of St. Peter, 'Casting all your care on the Lord, for he careth for you.' What an admirable thing is this, that God puts his shoulder to our burden, and entertains our care for us, that we may the more quietly intend his service! To conclude, let me commend only one place more to you: Philipp. iv. 4. St. Paul saith there, 'Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.' He doubles it, to take away the scruple of those that might say, What, shall we rejoice in afflictions? Yes, I say again, rejoice; so that it is not left to us to rejoice, or not rejoice; but, whatsoever befalls us, we must always, at all times, rejoice in the Lord, who taketh care for us. And it follows in the next verses: 'Let your moderation appear to all men: The Lord is at hand: Be careful for nothing.' What can be said more comfortably? Trouble not yourselves; God is at hand, to deliver us from all, or in all. Dear madam,

pardon my boldness, and accept the good meaning of

“Your most obedient son,

“GEORGE HERBERT.”

TRIN. COLL.,  
May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1622.

About the year 1629, and the thirty-fourth of his age, Mr. Herbert was seized with a sharp quotidian ague, and thought to remove it by the change of air; to which end he went to Woodford in Essex, but thither more chiefly to enjoy the company of his beloved brother, Sir Henry Herbert, and other friends then of that family. In his house he remained about twelve months, and there became his own physician, and cured himself of his ague, by forbearing to drink, and not eating any meat, no not mutton, nor a hen, or pigeon, unless they were salted; and by such a constant diet he removed his ague, but with inconveniences that were worse; for he brought upon himself a disposition to rheums, and other weaknesses, and a supposed consumption. And it is to be noted, that in the sharpest of his extreme fits he would often say, “Lord, abate my great affliction, or increase my patience; but Lord, I repine not; I am dumb, Lord, before Thee, because thou doest it.” By which, and a sanctified submission to the will of God, he showed he was inclinable to bear the sweet yoke of Christian discipline, both then and in the latter part of his life, of which there will be many true testimonies.

And now his care was to recover from his consumption, by a change from Woodford into such an air as was most proper to that end. And his remove was to Dauntsey in Wiltshire, a noble house, which stands in a choice air; the owner of it then was the Lord Danvers, Earl of Danby, who loved Mr. Herbert so very much, that he allowed him such an apartment in it, as might best suit with his accommodation and liking. And in this place, by a spare diet, declining all perplexing studies, moderate exercise, and a cheerful conversation, his health was apparently improved to a good degree of strength and cheerfulness. And then he declared his resolution both to marry and to enter into the sacred orders of priesthood. These had long been the desires of his mother, and his other relations; but she lived not to see either, for she died in the year 1627. And though he was disobedient to her about Layton Church, yet, in conformity to her will, he kept his Orator's place till after her death, and then presently declined it; and the more willingly, that he might be succeeded by his friend Robert Creighton, who now is Dr. Creighton, and the worthy Bishop of Wells.

I shall now proceed to his marriage; in order to which, it will be convenient that I first give the reader a short view of his person, and then an account of his wife, and of some circumstances concerning both. He was for his person of a stature inclining towards tallness; his body was very straight, and so far from being cumbered

with too much flesh, that he was lean to an extremity. His aspect was cheerful, and his speech and motion did both declare him a gentleman; for they were all so meek and obliging, that they purchased love and respect from all that knew him.

These, and his other visible virtues, begot him much love from a gentleman of a noble fortune, and a near kinsman to his friend the Earl of Danby; namely, from Mr. Charles Danvers of Bainton, in the county of Wilts, Esq. This Mr. Danvers, having known him long, and familiarly, did so much affect him, that he often and publicly declared a desire that Mr. Herbert would marry any of his nine daughters,—for he had so many,—but rather his daughter Jane than any other, because Jane was his beloved daughter. And he had often said the same to Mr. Herbert himself; and that if he could like her for a wife, and she him for a husband, Jane should have a double blessing: and Mr. Danvers had so often said the like to Jane, and so much commended Mr. Herbert to her, that Jane became so much a platonick, as to fall in love with Mr. Herbert unseen.

This was a fair preparation for a marriage; but, alas! her father died before Mr. Herbert's retirement to Dauntsey: yet some friends to both parties procured their meeting; at which time a mutual affection entered into both their hearts, as a conqueror enters into a surprised city; and love having got such possession, governed, and made there such laws and

resolutions, as neither party was able to resist; insomuch, that she changed her name into Herbert the third day after this first interview.

This haste might in others be thought a love-frenzy, or worse; but it was not, for they had wooed so like princes, as to have select proxies; such as were true friends to both parties, such as well understood Mr. Herbert's and her temper of mind, and also their estates, so well before this interview, that the suddenness was justifiable by the strictest rules of prudence; and the more, because it proved so happy to both parties; for the eternal lover of mankind made them happy in each other's mutual and equal affections, and compliance; indeed, so happy, that there never was any opposition betwixt them, unless it were a contest which should most incline to a compliance with the other's desires. And though this begot, and continued in them, such a mutual love, and joy, and content, as was no way defective; yet this mutual content, and love, and joy, did receive a daily augmentation, by such daily obligingness to each other, as still added such new affluences to the former fulness of these divine souls, as was only improvable in heaven, where they now enjoy it.

About three months after this marriage, Dr. Curle, who was then Rector of Bemerton, in Wiltshire, was made Bishop of Bath and Wells, and not long after translated to Winchester, and by that means the presentation of a clerk to Bemerton did not fall to the Earl of Pembroke, —who was the undoubted patron of it,—but to

the king, by reason of Dr. Curle's advancement : but Philip, then Earl of Pembroke, — for William was lately dead—requested the King to bestow it upon his kinsman George Herbert ; and the King said, “Most willingly to Mr. Herbert, if it be worth his acceptance” ; and the Earl as willingly and suddenly sent it him, without seeking. But though Mr. Herbert had formerly put on a resolution for the clergy ; yet, at receiving this presentation, the apprehension of the last great account, that he was to make for the cure of so many souls, made him fast and pray often, and consider for not less than a month : in which time he had some resolutions to decline both the priesthood and that living. And in this time of considering, “he endured,” as he would often say, “such spiritual conflicts, as none can think, but only those that have endured them.”

In the midst of these conflicts, his old and dear friend, Mr. Arthur Woodnot, took a journey to salute him at Bainton,—where he then was with his wife's friends and relations—and was joyful to be an eye-witness of his health and happy marriage. And after they had rejoiced together some few days, they took a journey to Wilton, the famous seat of the Earls of Pembroke ; at which time the King, the Earl, and the whole court were there, or at Salisbury, which is near to it. And at this time Mr. Herbert presented his thanks to the Earl for his presentation to Bemerton, but had not yet resolved to accept it, and told him the

reason why : but that night, the Earl acquainted Dr. Laud, then Bishop of London, and after Archbishop of Canterbury, with his kinsman's irresolution. And the Bishop did the next day so convince Mr. Herbert that the refusal of it was sin, that a tailor was sent for to come speedily from Salisbury to Wilton, to take measure, and make him canonical clothes against next day ; which the tailor did : and Mr. Herbert being so habited, went with his presentation to the learned Dr. Davenant, who was then Bishop of Salisbury, and he gave him institution immediately,—for Mr. Herbert had been made deacon some years before,—and he was also the same day—which was April 26th, 1630,—inducted into the good, and more pleasant than healthful, parsonage of Bemerton ; which is a mile from Salisbury.

I have now brought him to the parsonage of Bemerton, and to the thirty-sixth year of his age, and must stop here, and bespeak the reader to prepare for an almost incredible story, of the great sanctity of the short remainder of his holy life ; a life so full of charity, humility, and all Christian virtues, that it deserves the eloquence of St. Chrysostom to commend and declare it : a life, that if it were related by a pen like his, there would then be no need for this age to look back into times past for the examples of primitive piety ; for they might be all found in the life of George Herbert. But now, alas ! who is fit to undertake it ? I confess I am not ; and am not pleased with myself that I must ; and profess



myself amazed, when I consider how few of the clergy lived like him then, and how many live so unlike him now. But it becomes not me to censure : my design is rather to assure the reader that I have used very great diligence to inform myself, that I might inform him of the truth of what follows ; and though I cannot adorn it with eloquence, yet I will do it with sincerity.

When at his induction he was shut into Bemerton Church, being left there alone to toll the bell,—as the law requires him,—he stayed so much longer than an ordinary time, before he returned to those friends that stayed expecting him at the church door, that his friend Mr. Woodnot looked in at the church window, and saw him lie prostrate on the ground before the altar ; at which time and place—as he after told Mr. Woodnot—he set some rules to himself, for the future manage of his life ; and then and there made a vow to labour to keep them.

And the same night that he had his induction, he said to Mr. Woodnot, “I now look back upon my aspiring thoughts, and think myself more happy than if I had attained what then I so ambitiously thirsted for. And I now can behold the court with an impartial eye, and see plainly that it is made up of fraud and titles, and flattery, and many other such empty, imaginary, painted pleasures ; pleasures, that are so empty, as not to satisfy when they are enjoyed. But in God, and his service, is a fulness of all joy and pleasure, and no satiety. And I will now use all my endeavours to bring my relations and

dependants to a love and reliance on him, who never fails those that trust him. But above all, I will be sure to live well, because the virtuous life of a clergyman is the most powerful eloquence to persuade all that see it to reverence and love, and at least to desire to live like him. And this I will do, because I know we live in an age that hath more need of good examples than precepts. And I beseech that God, who hath honoured me so much as to call me to serve him at his altar, that as by his special grace he hath put into my heart these good desires and resolutions; so he will, by his assisting grace, give me ghostly strength to bring the same to good effect. And I beseech him, that my humble and charitable life may so win upon others, as to bring glory to my Jesus, whom I have this day taken to be my master and governor; and I am so proud of his service, that I will always observe, and obey, and do his will; and always call him, Jesus my Master; and I will always contemn my birth, or any title or dignity that can be conferred upon me, when I shall compare them with my title of being a priest, and serving at the altar of Jesus my Master."

And that he did so may appear in many parts of his book of *Sacred Poems*: especially in that which he calls "The Odour." In which he seems to rejoice in the thoughts of that word Jesus, and say, that the adding these words, my master, to it, and the often repetition of them, seemed to perfume his mind, and leave an

oriental fragrancy to his very breath. And for his unforced choice to serve at God's altar, he seems in another place of his poems, "The Pearl" (Matt. xiii. 45, 46), to rejoice and say: "He knew the ways of learning; knew what nature does willingly, and what, when it is forced by fire; knew the ways of honour, and when glory inclines the soul to noble expressions: knew the court: knew the ways of pleasure, of love, of wit, of music, and upon what terms he declined all these for the service of his master Jesus": and then concludes, saying—

That, through these labyrinths, not my grovelling  
wit,

But thy silk twist, let down from Heaven to me,  
Did both conduct, and teach me, how by it  
To climb to thee.

The third day after he was made Rector of Bemerton, and had changed his sword and silk clothes into a canonical coat, he returned so habited with his friend Mr. Woodnot to Bainton; and immediately after he had seen and saluted his wife, he said to her—"You are now a minister's wife, and must now so far forget your father's house, as not to claim a precedence of any of your parishioners; for you are to know, that a priest's wife can challenge no precedence or place, but that which she purchases by her obliging humility; and I am sure, places so purchased do best become them. And let me tell you, that I am so good a herald, as to assure you that this is truth." And she was so

meeke a wife, as to assure him, “It was no vexing news to her, and that he should see her observe it with a cheerful willingness.” And, indeed, her unforced humility, that humility that was in her so original, as to be born with her, made her so happy as to do so; and her doing so begot her an unfeigned love, and a serviceable respect from all that conversed with her; and this love followed her in all places, as inseparably as shadows follow substances in sunshine.

It was not many days before he returned back to Bemerton, to view the church and repair the chancel: and indeed, to rebuild almost three parts of his house, which was fallen down, or decayed by reason of his predecessor’s living at a better parsonage-house; namely, at Minal, sixteen or twenty miles from this place. At which time of Mr. Herbert’s coming alone to Bemerton, there came to him a poor old woman, with an intent to acquaint him with her necessitous condition, as also with some troubles of her mind: but after she had spoke some few words to him, she was surprised with a fear, and that begot a shortness of breath, so that her spirits and speech failed her; which he perceiving, did so compassionate her, and was so humble, that he took her by the hand, and said, “Speak, good mother; be not afraid to speak to me; for I am a man that will hear you with patience; and will relieve your necessities too, if I be able: and this I will do willingly; and therefore, mother, be not afraid to acquaint me with what you desire.” After which comfortable speech,

he again took her by the hand, made her sit down by him, and understanding she was of his parish, he told her “He would be acquainted with her, and take her into his care.” And having with patience heard and understood her wants,—and it is some relief for a poor body to be but heard with patience,—he, like a Christian clergyman, comforted her by his meek behaviour and counsel; but because that cost him nothing, he relieved her with money too, and so sent her home with a cheerful heart, praising God, and praying for him. Thus worthy, and—like David’s blessed man—thus lowly, was Mr. George Herbert in his own eyes, and thus lovely in the eyes of others.

At his return that night to his wife at Bainton, he gave her an account of the passages betwixt him and the poor woman; with which she was so affected, that she went next day to Salisbury, and there bought a pair of blankets, and sent them as a token of her love to the poor woman; and with them a message, “that she would see and be acquainted with her, when her house was built at Bemerton.”

There be many such passages both of him and his wife, of which some few will be related: but I shall first tell, that he hasted to get the parish church repaired; then to beautify the chapel,—which stands near his house,—and that at his own great charge. He then proceeded to rebuild the greatest part of the parsonage-house, which he did also very completely, and at his own charge; and having done this good work,

he caused these verses to be writ upon, or engraven in, the mantel of the chimney in his hall.

TO MY SUCCESSOR.

If thou chance for to find  
 A new house to thy mind,  
 And built without thy cost;  
 Be good to the poor,  
 As God gives thee store,  
 And then my labour's not lost.

We will now, by the reader's favour, suppose him fixed at Bemerton, and grant him to have seen the church repaired, and the chapel belonging to it very decently adorned at his own great charge,—which is a real truth;—and having now fixed him there, I shall proceed to give an account of the rest of his behaviour, both to his parishioners, and those many others that knew and conversed with him.

Doubtless Mr. Herbert had considered, and given rules to himself for his Christian carriage both to God and man, before he entered into holy orders. And 'tis not unlike, but that he renewed those resolutions at his prostration before the holy altar, at his induction into the church of Bemerton: but as yet he was but a deacon, and therefore longed for the next ember-week, that he might be ordained priest, and made capable of administering both the sacraments. At which time the Reverend Dr. Humphrey Henchman, now Lord Bishop of London,—who does not mention him but with some veneration for his life and excellent learning,—

tells me, "He laid his hand on Mr. Herbert's head, and, alas! within less than three years lent his shoulder to carry his dear friend to his grave."

And that Mr. Herbert might the better preserve those holy rules which such a priest as he intended to be ought to observe; and that time might not insensibly blot them out of his memory, but that the next year might show him his variations from this year's resolutions; he therefore did set down his rules, then resolved upon, in that order as the world now sees them printed in a little book, called *The Country Parson*; in which some of his rules are:

The Parson's knowledge.	The Parson condescending.
The Parson on Sundays.	The Parson in his journey.
The Parson praying.	The Parson in his mirth.
The Parson preaching.	The Parson with his Churchwardens.
The Parson's charity.	The Parson blessing the people.
The Parson comforting the sick.	
The Parson arguing.	

And his behaviour towards God and man may be said to be a practical comment on these, and the other holy rules set down in that useful book: a book so full of plain, prudent, and useful rules, that that country parson, that can spare twelve pence, and yet wants it, is scarce excusable; because it will both direct him what he ought to do, and convince him for not having done it.

At the death of Mr. Herbert this book fell

into the hands of his friend Mr. Woodnot; and he commended it into the trusty hands of Mr. Barnabas Oley, who published it with a most conscientious and excellent preface; from which I have had some of those truths, that are related in this life of Mr. Herbert. The text of his first sermon was taken out of Solomon's Proverbs, chap. iv. 23, and the words were, "Keep thy heart with all diligence." In which first sermon he gave his parishioners many necessary, holy, safe rules for the discharge of a good conscience, both to God and man; and delivered his sermon after a most florid manner, both with great learning and eloquence; but, at the close of this sermon, told them, "That should not be his constant way of preaching; for since Almighty God does not intend to lead men to heaven by hard questions, he would not therefore fill their heads with unnecessary notions; but that, for their sakes, his language and his expressions should be more plain and practical in his future sermons." And he then made it his humble request, "That they would be constant to the afternoon's service, and catechising"; and showed them convincing reasons why he desired it; and his obliging example and persuasions brought them to a willing conformity to his desires.

The texts for all his future sermons—which God knows, were not many—were constantly taken out of the gospel for the day; and he did as constantly declare why the Church did appoint that portion of Scripture to be that day



read; and in what manner the collect for every Sunday does refer to the gospel, or to the epistle then read to them; and, that they might pray with understanding, he did usually take occasion to explain, not only the collect for every particular Sunday, but the reasons of all the other collects and responses in our Church service; and made it appear to them, that the whole service of the Church was a reasonable, and therefore an acceptable sacrifice to God: as namely, that we begin with "Confession of ourselves to be vile, miserable sinners"; and that we begin so, because, till we have confessed ourselves to be such, we are not capable of that mercy which we acknowledge we need, and pray for: but having, in the prayer of our Lord, begged pardon for those sins which we have confessed; and hoping, that as the priest hath declared our absolution, so by our public confession, and real repentance, we have obtained that pardon; then we dare and do proceed to beg of the Lord, "to open our lips, that our mouth may show forth his praise"; for till then we are neither able nor worthy to praise him. But this being supposed, we are then fit to say, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost"; and fit to proceed to a further service of our God, in the collects, and psalms, and lauds, that follow in the service.

And as to the psalms and lauds, he proceeded to inform them why they were so often, and some of them daily, repeated in our Church

service; namely, the psalms every month, because they be an historical and thankful repetition of mercies past, and such a composition of prayers and praises, as ought to be repeated often, and publicly; for with such sacrifice God is honoured and well-pleased. This for the psalms.

And for the hymns and lauds appointed to be daily repeated or sung after the first and second lessons are read to the congregation; he proceeded to inform them, that it was most reasonable, after they have heard the will and goodness of God declared or preached by the priest in his reading the two chapters, that it was then a seasonable duty to rise up, and express their gratitude to Almighty God, for those his mercies to them, and to all mankind; and then to say with the Blessed Virgin, “that their souls do magnify the Lord, and that their spirits do also rejoice in God their Saviour”: and that it was their duty also to rejoice with Simeon in his song, and say with him, “That their eyes have” also “seen their salvation”; for they have seen that salvation which was but prophesied till his time: and he then broke out into these expressions of joy that he did see it; but they live to see it daily in the history of it, and therefore ought daily to rejoice, and daily to offer up their sacrifices of praise to their God, for that particular mercy. A service, which is now the constant employment of that Blessed Virgin and Simeon, and all those blessed saints that are possessed of heaven: and where they are at this

time interchangeably and constantly singing, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God; glory be to God on high, and on earth peace." And he taught them that to do this was an acceptable service to God, because the Prophet David says in his Psalms, "He that praiseth the Lord honoureth him."

He made them to understand how happy they be that are freed from the incumbrances of that law which our forefathers groaned under: namely, from the legal sacrifices, and from the many ceremonies of the Levitical law; freed from circumcision, and from the strict observation of the Jewish Sabbath, and the like. And he made them know, that having received so many and so great blessings, by being born since the days of our Saviour, it must be an acceptable sacrifice to Almighty God, for them to acknowledge those blessings daily, and stand up and worship, and say as Zacharias did, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath—in our days—visited and redeemed his people; and—he hath in our days—remembered, and showed that mercy, which by the mouth of the prophet he promised to our forefathers; and this he has done according to his holy covenant made with them." And he made them to understand that we live to see and enjoy the benefit of it, in His birth, in His life, His passion, His resurrection, and ascension into heaven, where He now sits sensible of all our temptations and infirmities; and where He is at this present time making intercession for us, to His and our Father: and

therefore they ought daily to express their public gratulations, and say daily with Zacharias, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that hath thus visited and thus redeemed his people." These were some of the reasons by which Mr. Herbert instructed his congregation for the use of the psalms and hymns appointed to be daily sung or said in the Church service.

He informed them also when the priest did pray only for the congregation, and not for himself; and when they did only pray for him; as namely, after the repetition of the creed before he proceeds to pray the Lord's Prayer, or any of the appointed collects, the priest is directed to kneel down, and pray for them, saying, "The Lord be with you"; and when they pray for him, saying, "And with thy spirit"; and then they join together in the following collects: and he assured them, that when there is such mutual love, and such joint prayers offered for each other, then the holy angels look down from heaven, and are ready to carry such charitable desires to God Almighty, and he as ready to receive them; and that a Christian congregation calling thus upon God with one heart, and one voice, and in one reverent and humble posture, looks as beautifully as Jerusalem, that is at peace with itself.

He instructed them also why the prayer of our Lord was prayed often in every full service of the Church; namely, at the conclusion of the several parts of that service; and prayed then, not only because it was composed and

commanded by our Jesus that made it, but as a perfect pattern for our less perfect forms of prayer, and therefore fittest to sum up and conclude all our imperfect petitions.

He instructed them also, that as by the second commandment we are required not to bow down, or worship an idol, or false God; so, by the contrary rule, we are to bow down and kneel, or stand up and worship the true God. And he instructed them why the Church required the congregation to stand up at the repetition of the creeds; namely, because they thereby declare both their obedience to the Church, and an assent to that faith into which they had been baptized. And he taught them, that in that shorter creed or doxology, so often repeated daily, they also stood up to testify their belief to be, that “the God that they trusted in was one God, and three persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; to whom they and the priest gave glory.” And because there had been heretics that had denied some of those three persons to be God, therefore the congregation stood up and honoured him, by confessing and saying, “It was so in the beginning, is now so, and shall ever be so, world without end.” And all gave their assent to this belief, by standing up and saying, Amen.

He instructed them also what benefit they had by the Church’s appointing the celebration of holidays and the excellent use of them, namely, that they were set apart for particular commemorations of particular mercies received

from Almighty God; and—as Reverend Mr. Hooker says—to be the landmarks to distinguish times; for by them we are taught to take notice how time passes by us, and that we ought not to let the years pass without a celebration of praise for those mercies which those days give us occasion to remember, and therefore they were to note that the year is appointed to begin the 25th day of March; a day in which we commemorate the angel's appearing to the Blessed Virgin, with the joyful tidings that “she should conceive and bear a son, that should be the redeemer of mankind.” And she did so forty weeks after this joyful salutation; namely, at our Christmas; a day in which we commemorate his birth with joy and praise: and that eight days after this happy birth we celebrate his circumcision; namely, in that which we call New Year's day. And that, upon that day which we call Twelfth day, we commemorate the manifestation of the unsearchable riches of Jesus to the Gentiles: and that that day we also celebrate the memory of his goodness in sending a star to guide the three wise men from the east to Bethlehem, that they might there worship, and present him with their oblations of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And he—Mr. Herbert—instructed them, that Jesus was forty days after his birth presented by his blessed mother in the temple; namely, on that day which we call “The Purification of the Blessed Virgin, Saint Mary.” And he instructed them, that by the Lent-fast we

imitate and commemorate our Saviour's humiliation in fasting forty days; and that we ought to endeavour to be like him in purity: and that on Good Friday we commemorate and condole his crucifixion; and at Easter commemorate his glorious resurrection. And he taught them, that after Jesus had manifested himself to his disciples to be "that Christ that was crucified, dead and buried"; and by his appearing and conversing with his disciples for the space of forty days after his resurrection, he then, and not till then, ascended into heaven in the sight of those disciples; namely, on that day which we call the ascension, or Holy Thursday. And that we then celebrate the performance of the promise which he made to his disciples at or before his ascension; namely, "that though he left them, yet he would send them the Holy Ghost to be their comforter"; and that he did so on that day which the Church calls Whitsunday. Thus the Church keeps an historical and circular commemoration of times, as they pass by us; of such times as ought to incline us to occasional praises, for the particular blessings which we do, or might receive, by those holy commemorations.

He made them know also why the Church hath appointed ember-weeks; and to know the reason why the commandments, and the Epistles and Gospels, were to be read at the altar or communion table, why the priest was to pray the Litany kneeling; and why to pray some collects standing: and he gave them many other

observations, fit for his plain congregation, but not fit for me now to mention; for I must set limits to my pen, and not make that a treatise, which I intended to be a much shorter account than I have made it: but I have done, when I have told the reader that he was constant in catechising every Sunday in the afternoon, and that his catechising was after his second lesson, and in the pulpit; and that he never exceeded his half-hour, and was always so happy as to have an obedient and a full congregation.

And to this I must add, that if he were at any time too zealous in his sermons, it was in reproving the indecencies of the people's behaviour in the time of divine service; and of those ministers that huddle up the Church prayers, without a visible reverence and affection; namely, such as seemed to say the Lord's Prayer or a collect in a breath. But for himself, his custom was to stop betwixt every collect, and give the people time to consider what they had prayed, and to force their desires affectionately to God, before he engaged them into new petitions.

And by this account of his diligence to make his parishioners understand what they prayed, and why they praised and adored their Creator, I hope I shall the more easily obtain the reader's belief to the following account of Mr. Herbert's own practice; which was to appear constantly with his wife and three nieces—the daughters of a deceased sister—and his whole family, twice every day at the Church prayers in the



chapel, which does almost join to his parsonage-house. And for the time of his appearing, it was strictly at the canonical hours of ten and four: and then and there he lifted up pure and charitable hands to God in the midst of the congregation. And he would joy to have spent that time in that place, where the honour of his master Jesus dwelleth; and there, by that inward devotion which he testified constantly by a humble behaviour and visible adoration, he, like Joshua, brought not only "his own household thus to serve the Lord"; but brought most of his parishioners, and many gentlemen in the neighbourhood, constantly to make a part of his congregation twice a day: and some of the meaner sort of his parish did so love and reverence Mr. Herbert, that they would let their plough rest when Mr. Herbert's saint's-bell rung to prayers, that they might also offer their devotions to God with him; and would then return back to their plough. And his most holy life was such, that it begot such reverence to God, and to him, that they thought themselves the happier, when they carried Mr. Herbert's blessing back with them to their labour. Thus powerful was his reason and example to persuade others to a practical piety and devotion.

And his constant public prayers did never make him to neglect his own private devotions, nor those prayers that he thought himself bound to perform with his family, which always were a set form, and not long; and he did always

conclude them with a collect which the Church hath appointed for the day or week. Thus he made every day's sanctity a step towards that kingdom, where impurity cannot enter.

His chiefest recreation was music, in which heavenly art he was a most excellent master, and did himself compose many divine hymns and anthems, which he set and sung to his lute or viol: and though he was a lover of retiredness, yet his love to music was such, that he went usually twice every week, on certain appointed days, to the Cathedral Church in Salisbury; and at his return would say, "That his time spent in prayer, and cathedral-music, elevated his soul, and was his heaven upon earth." But before his return thence to Bemerton, he would usually sing and play his part at an appointed private music-meeting; and, to justify this practice, he would often say, "Religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates and sets rules to it."

And as his desire to enjoy his heaven upon earth drew him twice every week to Salisbury, so his walks thither were the occasion of many happy accidents to others; of which I will mention some few.

In one of his walks to Salisbury, he overtook a gentleman, that is still living in that city; and in their walk together, Mr. Herbert took a fair occasion to talk with him, and humbly begged to be excused, if he asked him some account of his faith; and said, "I do this the rather because though you are not of my parish, yet I

receive tithe from you by the hand of your tenant; and, sir, I am the bolder to do it, because I know there be some sermon-hearers that be like those fishes that always live in salt water, and yet are always fresh.”

After which expression, Mr. Herbert asked him some needful questions, and having received his answer, gave him such rules for the trial of his sincerity, and for a practical piety, and in so loving and meek a manner, that the gentleman did so fall in love with him, and his discourse, that he would often contrive to meet him in his walk to Salisbury, or to attend him back to Bemerton; and still mentions the name of Mr. George Herbert with veneration, and still praiseth God for the occasion of knowing him.

In another of his Salisbury walks he met with a neighbour minister; and after some friendly discourse betwixt them, and some condolment for the decay of piety, and too general contempt of the clergy, Mr. Herbert took occasion to say—

“One cure for these distempers would be for the clergy themselves to keep the ember-weeks strictly, and beg of their parishioners to join with them in fasting and prayers for a more religious clergy.

“And another cure would be for themselves to restore the great and neglected duty of catechising, on which the salvation of so many of the poor and ignorant lay-people does depend; but principally, that the clergy themselves would be sure to live unblamably; and that the

dignified clergy especially which preach temperance would avoid surfeiting and take all occasions to express a visible humility and charity in their lives; for this would force a love and an imitation, and an unfeigned reverence from all that knew them to be such." (And for proof of this, we need no other testimony than the life and death of Dr. Lake, late Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells.) "This," said Mr. Herbert, "would be a cure for the wickedness and growing atheism of our age. And, my dear brother, till this be done by us, and done in earnest, let no man expect a reformation of the manners of the laity; for 'tis not learning, but this, this only that must do it; and, till then, the fault must lie at our doors."

In another walk to Salisbury he saw a poor man with a poorer horse, that was fallen under his load: they were both in distress, and needed present help; which Mr. Herbert perceiving, put off his canonical coat, and helped the poor man to unload, and after to load, his horse. The poor man blessed him for it, and he blessed the poor man; and was so like the good Samaritan, that he gave him money to refresh both himself and his horse; and told him, "That if he loved himself he should be merciful to his beast." Thus he left the poor man: and at his coming to his musical friends at Salisbury, they began to wonder that Mr. George Herbert, which used to be so trim and clean, came into that company so soiled and discomposed: but he told them the occasion. And when one of

the company told him "He had disparaged himself by so dirty an employment," his answer was, "That the thought of what he had done would prove music to him at midnight; and that the omission of it would have upbraided and made discord in his conscience, whensoever he should pass by that place: for if I be bound to pray for all that be in distress, I am sure that I am bound, so far as it is in my power, to practise what I pray for. And though I do not wish for the like occasion every day, yet let me tell you, I would not willingly pass one day of my life without comforting a sad soul, or showing mercy; and I praise God for this occasion. And now let's tune our instruments."

Thus, as our blessed Saviour, after his resurrection, did take occasion to interpret the Scripture to Cleopas, and that other disciple, which he met with and accompanied in their journey to Emmaus; so Mr. Herbert, in his path toward heaven, did daily take any fair occasion to instruct the ignorant, or comfort any that were in affliction; and did always confirm his precepts by showing humility and mercy, and ministering grace to the hearers.

And he was most happy in his wife's unforced compliance with his acts of charity, whom he made his almoner, and paid constantly into her hand, a tenth penny of what money he received for tithe, and gave her power to dispose that to the poor of his parish, and with it a power to dispose a tenth part of the corn that came yearly into his barn: which trust she did

most faithfully perform, and would often offer to him an account of her stewardship, and as often beg an enlargement of his bounty; for she rejoiced in the employment: and this was usually laid out by her in blankets and shoes for some such poor people as she knew to stand in most need of them. This as to her charity. —And for his own, he set no limits to it: nor did ever turn his face from any that he saw in want, but would relieve them; especially his poor neighbours; to the meanest of whose houses he would go, and inform himself of their wants, and relieve them cheerfully, if they were in distress; and would always praise God, as much for being willing, as for being able to do it. And when he was advised by a friend to be more frugal, because he might have children, his answer was, “He would not see the danger of want so far off: but being the Scripture does so commend charity, as to tell us that charity is the top of Christian virtues, the covering of sins, the fulfilling of the law, the life of faith; and that charity hath a promise of the blessings of this life, and of a reward in that life which is to come: being these, and more excellent things are in Scripture spoken of thee, O charity! and that, being all my tithes and Church dues are a deodate from Thee, O my God! make me, O my God! so far to trust Thy promise, as to return them back to Thee; and by Thy grace I will do so, in distributing them to any of Thy poor members that are in distress, or do but bear the image of Jesus my master.” “Sir,”

said he to his friend, "my wife hath a competent maintenance secured her after my death; and therefore, as this is my prayer, so this my resolution shall, by God's grace, be unalterable."

This may be some account of the excellencies of the active part of his life; and thus he continued, till a consumption so weakened him, as to confine him to his house, or to the chapel, which does almost join to it; in which he continued to read prayers constantly twice every day, though he were very weak: in one of which times of his reading, his wife observed him to read in pain, and told him so, and that it wasted his spirits, and weakened him; and he confessed it did, but said, his "life could not be better spent, than in the service of his master Jesus, who had done and suffered so much for him. But," said he, "I will not be wilful; for though my spirit be willing, yet I find my flesh is weak; and therefore Mr. Bostock shall be appointed to read prayers for me to-morrow; and I will now be only a hearer of them, till this mortal shall put on immortality." And Mr. Bostock did the next day undertake and continue this happy employment till Mr. Herbert's death. This Mr. Bostock was a learned and virtuous man, an old friend of Mr. Herbert's, and then his curate to the church of Fulston, which is a mile from Bemerton, to which church Bemerton is but a chapel of ease. And this Mr. Bostock did also constantly supply the Church service for Mr. Herbert in that chapel, when the music-meeting at Salisbury caused his absence from it.

About one month before his death, his friend Mr. Farrer,—for an account of whom I am by promise indebted to the reader, and intend to make him sudden payment,—hearing of Mr. Herbert's sickness, sent Mr. Edmund Duncon—who is now rector of Friar Barnet in the county of Middlesex—from his house of Gidden Hall, which is near to Huntingdon, to see Mr. Herbert, and to assure him he wanted not his daily prayers for his recovery; and Mr. Duncon was to return back to Gidden, with an account of Mr. Herbert's condition. Mr. Duncon found him weak, and at that time lying on his bed, or on a pallet; but at his seeing Mr. Duncon he raised himself vigorously, saluted him, and with some earnestness inquired the health of his brother Farrer; of which Mr. Duncon satisfied him, and after some discourse of Mr. Farrer's holy life, and the manner of his constant serving God, he said to Mr. Duncon,—“Sir, I see by your habit that you are a priest, and I desire you to pray with me”: which being granted, Mr. Duncon asked him, “What prayers?” To which Mr. Herbert's answer was, “O, sir! the prayers of my mother, the Church of England: no other prayers are equal to them! But at this time, I beg of you to pray only the Litany, for I am weak and faint”: and Mr. Duncon did so. After which, and some other discourse of Mr. Farrer, Mrs. Herbert provided Mr. Duncon a plain supper, and a clean lodging, and he betook himself to rest. This Mr. Duncon tells me; and tells



me, that, at his first view of Mr. Herbert, he saw majesty and humility so reconciled in his looks and behaviour, as begot in him an awful reverence for his person; and says, “his discourse was so pious, and his motion so genteel and meek, that after almost forty years, yet they remain still fresh in his memory.”

The next morning Mr. Duncon left him, and betook himself to a journey to Bath, but with a promise to return back to him within five days; and he did so: but before I shall say anything of what discourse then fell betwixt them two, I will pay my promised account of Mr. Farrer.

Mr. Nicholas Farrer—who got the reputation of being called Saint Nicholas at the age of six years—was born in London, and doubtless had good education in his youth; but certainly was, at an early age, made Fellow of Clare Hall in Cambridge; where he continued to be eminent for his piety, temperance, and learning. About the twenty-sixth year of his age he betook himself to travel: in which he added, to his Latin and Greek, a perfect knowledge of all the languages spoken in the western parts of our Christian world; and understood well the principles of their religion, and of their manner, and the reasons of their worship. In this his travel he met with many persuasions to come into a communion with that Church which calls itself Catholic: but he returned from his travels as he went, eminent for his obedience to his mother, the Church of England. In his absence from England, Mr. Farrer’s father—who was

a merchant—allowed him a liberal maintenance ; and, not long after his return into England, Mr. Farrer had, by the death of his father, or an elder brother, or both, an estate left him, that enabled him to purchase land to the value of four or five hundred pounds a year ; the greatest part of which land was at Little Gidden, four or six miles from Huntingdon, and about eighteen from Cambridge ; which place he chose for the privacy of it, and for the hall, which had the parish church or chapel belonging and adjoining near to it ; for Mr. Farrer, having seen the manners and vanities of the world, and found them to be, as Mr. Herbert says, “a nothing between two dishes,” did so contemn it, that he resolved to spend the remainder of his life in mortifications, and in devotion, and charity, and to be always prepared for death. And his life was spent thus :

He and his family, which were like a little college, and about thirty in number, did most of them keep Lent and all ember-weeks strictly, both in fasting and using all those mortifications and prayers that the Church hath appointed to be then used : and he and they did the like constantly on Fridays, and on the vigils or eves appointed to be fasted before the saints' days : and this frugality and abstinence turned to the relief of the poor : but this was but a part of his charity ; none but God and he knew the rest.

This family, which I have said to be in number about thirty, were a part of them his kindred, and the rest chosen to be of a temper

fit to be moulded into a devout life; and all of them were for their dispositions serviceable, and quiet, and humble, and free from scandal. Having thus fitted himself for his family, he did, about the year 1630, betake himself to a constant and methodical service of God; and it was in this manner:—He, being accompanied with most of his family, did himself use to read the common prayers—for he was a deacon—every day, at the appointed hours of ten and four, in the parish church, which was very near his house, and which he had both repaired and adorned; for it was fallen into a great ruin, by reason of a depopulation of the village before Mr. Farrer bought the manor. And he did also constantly read the matins every morning at the hour of six, either in the church, or in an oratory, which was within his own house. And many of the family did there continue with him after the prayers were ended, and there they spent some hours in singing hymns, or anthems, sometimes in the church, and often to an organ in the oratory. And there they sometimes betook themselves to meditate, or to pray privately, or to read a part of the New Testament to themselves, or to continue their praying or reading the psalms; and in case the psalms were not always read in the day, then Mr. Farrer, and others of the congregation, did at night, at the ringing of a watch-bell, repair to the church or oratory, and there betake themselves to prayers and lauding God, and reading the psalms that had not been read in the

day: and when these, or any part of the congregation, grew weary or faint, the watch-bell was rung, sometimes before, and sometimes after midnight; and then another part of the family rose, and maintained the watch, sometimes by praying, or singing lauds to God, or reading the psalms; and when, after some hours, they also grew weary or faint, then they rung the watch-bell and were also relieved by some of the former, or by a new part of the society, which continued their devotions—as hath been mentioned—until morning. And it is to be noted, that in this continued serving of God, the psalter or the whole book of psalms, was in every four-and-twenty hours sung or read over, from the first to the last verse: and this was done as constantly as the sun runs his circle every day about the world, and then begins again the same instant that it ended.

Thus did Mr. Farrer and his happy family serve God day and night; thus did they always behave themselves as in his presence. And they did always eat and drink by the strictest rules of temperance; eat and drink so as to be ready to rise at midnight, or at the call of a watch-bell, and perform their devotions to God. And it is fit to tell the reader, that many of the clergy, that were more inclined to practical piety and devotion, than to doubtful and needless disputations, did often come to Gidden Hall, and make themselves a part of that happy society, and stay a week or more, and then join with Mr. Farrer and the family in these

devotions, and assist and ease him or them in their watch by night. And these various devotions had never less than two of the domestic family in the night; and the watch was always kept in the church or oratory, unless in extreme cold winter nights, and then it was maintained in a parlour, which had a fire in it; and the parlour was fitted for that purpose. And this course of piety, and great liberality to his poor neighbours, Mr. Farrer maintained till his death, which was in the year 1639.

Mr. Farrer's and Mr. Herbert's devout lives were both so noted, that the general report of their sanctity gave them occasion to renew that slight acquaintance which was begun at their being contemporaries in Cambridge; and this new holy friendship was long maintained without any interview, but only by loving and endearing letters. And one testimony of their friendship and pious designs, may appear by Mr. Farrer's commending the *Considerations of John Valdeso*—a book which he had met with in his travels, and translated out of Spanish into English,—to be examined and censured by Mr. Herbert before it was made public: which excellent book Mr. Herbert did read, and return back with many marginal notes, as they be now printed with it; and with them, Mr. Herbert's affectionate letter to Mr. Farrer.

This John Valdeso was a Spaniard, and was for his learning and virtue much valued and loved by the great Emperor Charles the Fifth, whom Valdeso had followed as a cavalier all

the time of his long and dangerous wars: and when Valdesso grew old, and grew weary both of war and the world, he took his fair opportunity to declare to the Emperor, that his resolution was to decline his Majesty's service, and betake himself to a quiet and contemplative life, "because there ought to be a vacancy of time betwixt fighting and dying." The Emperor had himself, for the same, or other like reasons, put on the same resolution: but God and himself did, till then, only know them; and he did therefore desire Valdesso to consider well of what he had said, and to keep his purpose within his own breast, till they two might have a second opportunity of a friendly discourse; which Valdesso promised to do.

In the meantime the Emperor appoints privately a day for him and Valdesso to meet again; and after a pious and free discourse, they both agreed on a certain day to receive the blessed sacrament publicly; and appointed an eloquent and devout friar to preach a sermon of contempt of the world, and of the happiness and benefit of a quiet and contemplative life; which the friar did most affectionately. After which sermon, the Emperor took occasion to declare openly, "That the preacher had begot in him a resolution to lay down his dignities, and to forsake the world, and betake himself to a monastical life." And he pretended he had persuaded John Valdesso to do the like: but this is most certain, that after the Emperor had called his son Philip out of England, and resigned

to him all his kingdoms, that then the Emperor and John Valdesso did perform their resolutions.

This account of John Valdesso I received from a friend, that had it from the mouth of Mr. Farrer. And the reader may note, that in this retirement John Valdesso writ his *Hundred and Ten Considerations*, and many other treatises of worth, which want a second Mr. Farrer to procure and translate them.

After this account of Mr. Farrer and John Valdesso, I proceed to my account of Mr. Herbert and Mr. Duncon, who according to his promise returned from Bath the fifth day, and then found Mr. Herbert much weaker than he left him; and therefore their discourse could not be long: but at Mr. Duncon's parting with him, Mr. Herbert spoke to this purpose: "Sir, I pray you give my brother Farrer an account of the decaying condition of my body, and tell him I beg him to continue his daily prayers for me; and let him know that I have considered, that God only is what He would be; and that I am, by His grace, become now so like Him, as to be pleased with what pleaseth Him; and tell him, that I do not repine but am pleased with my want of health: and tell him, my heart is fixed on that place where true joy is only to be found; and that I long to be there, and do wait for my appointed change with hope and patience." Having said this, he did, with so sweet a humility as seemed to exalt him, bow down to Mr. Duncon, and with a thoughtful and contented look, say to him, "Sir, I pray

deliver this little book to my dear brother Farrer, and tell him he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed betwixt God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my master: in whose service I have now found perfect freedom. Desire him to read it; and then, if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul, let it be made public; if not, let him burn it; for I and it are less than the least of God's mercies." Thus meanly did this humble man think of this excellent book, which now bears the name of *The Temple; or, Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations*; of which Mr. Farrer would say, "There was in it the picture of a divine soul in every page: and that the whole book was such a harmony of holy passions, as would enrich the world with pleasure and piety." And it appears to have done so; for there have been more than twenty thousand of them sold since the first impression.

And this ought to be noted, that when Mr. Farrer sent this book to Cambridge to be licensed for the press, the Vice-Chancellor would by no means allow the two so much noted verses,

Religion stands a tiptoe in our land,  
Ready to pass to the American strand,

to be printed; and Mr. Farrer would by no means allow the book to be printed and want them. But after some time, and some arguments for and against their being made public, the Vice-Chancellor said, "I knew Mr. Herbert



well, and know that he had many heavenly speculations, and was a divine poet: but I hope the world will not take him to be an inspired prophet, and therefore I licence the whole book." So that it came to be printed without the diminution or addition of a syllable, since it was delivered into the hands of Mr. Duncon, save only that Mr. Farrer hath added that excellent preface that is printed before it.

At the time of Mr. Duncon's leaving Mr. Herbert,—which was about three weeks before his death,—his old and dear friend Mr. Woodnot came from London to Bemerton, and never left him till he had seen him draw his last breath, and closed his eyes on his deathbed. In this time of his decay, he was often visited and prayed for by all the clergy that lived near to him, especially by his friends the Bishop and Prebends of the Cathedral Church in Salisbury; but by none more devoutly than his wife, his three nieces,—then a part of his family,—and Mr. Woodnot, who were the sad witnesses of his daily decay; to whom he would often speak to this purpose: "I now look back upon the pleasures of my life past, and see the content I have taken in beauty, in wit, in music, and pleasant conversation, are now all past by me like a dream, or as a shadow that returns not, and are now all become dead to me, or I to them; and I see, that as my father and generation hath done before me, so I also shall now suddenly (with Job) make my bed also in the dark; and I praise God I am prepared for it;

and I praise him that I am not to learn patience now I stand in such need of it; and that I have practised mortification, and endeavoured to die daily, that I might not die eternally; and my hope is, that I shall shortly leave this valley of tears, and be free from all fevers and pain; and, which will be a more happy condition, I shall be free from sin, and all the temptations and anxieties that attend it: and this being past, I shall dwell in the New Jerusalem; dwell there with men made perfect; dwell where these eyes shall see my master and Saviour Jesus; and with him see my dear mother, and all my relations and friends. But I must die, or not come to that happy place. And this is my content, that I am going daily towards it: and that every day which I have lived, hath taken a part of my appointed time from me; and that I shall live the less time, for having lived this and the day past." These, and the like expressions, which he uttered often, may be said to be his enjoyment of heaven before he enjoyed it. The Sunday before his death, he rose suddenly from his bed or couch, called for one of his instruments, took it into his hand and said—

My God, my God,  
My music shall find thee,  
And every string  
Shall have his attribute to sing.

And having tuned it, he played and sung—

The Sundays of man's life,  
Threaded together on time's string,

Make bracelets to adorn the wife  
Of the eternal glorious King:  
On Sundays Heaven's door stands ope;  
Blessings are plentiful and rife,  
More plentiful than hope.

Thus he sung on earth such hymns and anthems as the angels, and he, and Mr. Farrer now sing in heaven.

Thus he continued meditating, and praying, and rejoicing, till the day of his death; and on that day said to Mr. Woodnot, "My dear friend, I am sorry, I have nothing to present to my merciful God but sin and misery; but the first is pardoned, and a few hours will now put a period to the latter; for I shall suddenly go hence, and be no more seen." Upon which expression Mr. Woodnot took occasion to remember him of the re-edifying Layton Church, and his many acts of mercy. To which he made answer, saying, "They be good works, if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and not otherwise." After this discourse he became more restless, and his soul seemed to be weary of her earthly tabernacle; and this uneasiness became so visible, that his wife, his three nieces, and Mr. Woodnot, stood constantly about his bed, beholding him with sorrow, and an unwillingness to lose the sight of him, whom they could not hope to see much longer. As they stood thus beholding him, his wife observed him to breathe faintly, and with much trouble, and observed him to fall into a sudden agony; which so surprised her, that she fell into a sudden

passion, and required of him to know how he did. To which his answer was, "that he had passed a conflict with his last enemy, and had overcome him by the merits of his master Jesus." After which answer, he looked up, and saw his wife and nieces weeping to an extremity, and charged them, if they loved him, to withdraw into the next room, and there pray every one alone for him; for nothing but their lamentations could make his death uncomfortable. To which request their sighs and tears would not suffer them to make any reply; but they yielded him a sad obedience, leaving only with him Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock. Immediately after they had left him, he said to Mr. Bostock, "Pray, sir, open that door, then look into that cabinet, in which you may easily find my last will, and give it into my hand": which being done, Mr. Herbert delivered it into the hand of Mr. Woodnot, and said, "My old friend, I here deliver you my last will, in which you will find that I have made you my sole executor for the good of my wife and nieces; and I desire you to show kindness to them, as they shall need it: I do not desire you to be just; for I know you will be so for your own sake; but I charge you, by the religion of our friendship, to be careful of them." And having obtained Mr. Woodnot's promise to be so, he said, "I am now ready to die." After which words, he said, "Lord, forsake me not now my strength faileth me: but grant me mercy for the merits of my Jesus. And now Lord—Lord,

now receive my soul." And with those words he breathed forth his divine soul, without any apparent disturbance, Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock attending his last breath, and closing his eyes.

Thus he lived, and thus he died, like a saint, unspotted of the world, full of alms-deeds, full of humility, and all the examples of a virtuous life; which I cannot conclude better, than with this borrowed observation:

—All must to their cold graves:  
But the religious actions of the just  
Smell sweet in death, and blossom in the dust.

Mr. George Herbert's have done so to this, and will doubtless do so to succeeding generations. I have but this to say more of him; that if Andrew Melvin died before him, then George Herbert died without an enemy. I wish—if God shall be so pleased—that I may be so happy as to die like him. Iz. WA.

There is a debt justly due to the memory of Mr. Herbert's virtuous wife; a part of which I will endeavour to pay, by a very short account of the remainder of her life, which shall follow.

She continued his disconsolate widow about six years, bemoaning herself, and complaining, that she had lost the delight of her eyes; but more that she had lost the spiritual guide for her poor soul; and would often say, "O that I had, like holy Mary, the mother of Jesus, treasured up all his sayings in my heart! But since I have not been able to do that, I will labour to

live like him, that where he now is I may be also." And she would often say, — as the prophet David for his son Absalom, — "O that I had died for him!" Thus she continued mourning till time and conversation had so moderated her sorrows, that she became the happy wife of Sir Robert Cook, of Highnam, in the county of Gloucester, Knight. And though he put a high value on the excellent accomplishments of her mind and body, and was so like Mr. Herbert, as not to govern like a master, but as an affectionate husband; yet she would even to him often take occasion to mention the name of Mr. George Herbert, and say, that name must live in her memory till she put off mortality. By Sir Robert she had only one child, a daughter, whose parts and plentiful estate make her happy in this world, and her well using of them gives a fair testimony that she will be so in that which is to come.

Mrs. Herbert was the wife of Sir Robert eight years, and lived his widow about fifteen; all which time she took a pleasure in mentioning and commending the excellencies of Mr. George Herbert. She died in the year 1663, and lies buried at Highnam: Mr. Herbert in his own church, under the altar, and covered with a gravestone without any inscription.

This Lady Cook had preserved many of Mr. Herbert's private writings, which she intended to make public; but they and Highnam House were burnt together by the late rebels, and so lost to posterity.

I. W.

THE  
TEMPLE  
SACRED POEMS  
AND  
PRIVATE EJA-  
CULATIONS.

By Mr. GEORGE HERBERT.

PSAL. 29.

*In his Temple doth every  
man speak of his honour.*



CAMBRIDGE:  
Printed by *Thom. Buck,*  
and *Roger Daniel,* printers  
to the Universitie.

1633.

## The Dedication

*L*ORD, my first fruits present themselves to thee ;  
Yet not mine neither : for from thee they came,  
And must return. Accept of them and me,  
And make us strive, who shall sing best thy name.  
Turn their eyes hither, who shall make a gain :  
Theirs, who shall hurt themselves or me, refrain.



## The Printers to the Reader<sup>1</sup>

THE dedication of this work having been made by the Authour to the *Divine Majesty* onely, how should we now presume to interest any mortall man in the patronage of it? Much lesse think we it meet to seek the recommendation of the Muses, for that which himself was confident to have been inspired by a diviner breath than flows from *Helicon*. The world therefore shall receive it in that naked simplicitie, with which he left it, without any addition either of support or ornament, more then is included in it self. We leave it free and un-forestalled to every man's judgement, and to the benefit that he shall finde by perusall. Onely for the clearing of some passages, we have thought it not unfit to make the common Reader privie to some few particularities of the condition and disposition of the Person;

Being nobly born, and as eminently endued with gifts of the minde, and having by industrie and happy education perfected them to that great height of excellencie, whereof his fellowship of Trinitie Colledge in Cambridge, and his Orator-ship in the Universitie, together with

<sup>1</sup> The work of Nicholas Ferrar.

that knowledge which the King's Court had taken of him, could make relation farre above ordinarie. Quitting both his deserts and all the opportunities that he had for worldly preferment, he betook himself to the Sanctuarie and Temple of God, choosing rather to serve at God's Altar, then to seek the honour of State-employments. As for those inward enforcements to this course (for outward there was none) which many of these ensuing verses bear witness of, they detract not from the freedome, but adde to the honour of this resolution in him. As God had enabled him, so he accounted him meet not onely to be called, but to be compelled to this service: Wherein his faithful discharge was such, as may make him justly a companion to the primitive Saints, and a pattern or more for the age he lived in.

To testifie his independencie upon all others, and to quicken his diligence in this kinde, he used in his ordinarie speech, when he made mention of the blessed name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to adde, *My Master*.

Next God, he loved that which God himself hath magnified above all things, that is, his Word: so as he hath been heard to make solemn protestation, that he would not part with one leaf thereof for the whole world, if it were offered him in exchange.

His obedience and conformitie to the Church and the discipline thereof was singularly remarkable. Though he abounded in private devotions, yet went he every morning and evening with his

familie to the Church; and by his example, exhortations, and encouragements drew the greater part of his parishioners to accompanie him dayly in the publick celebration of Divine Service.

As for worldly matters, his love and esteem to them was so little, as no man can more ambitiously seek, then he did earnestly endeavour the resignation of an Ecclesiasticall dignitie, which he was possessour of. But God permitted not the accomplishment of this desire, having ordained him his instrument for re-edifying of the Church belonging thereunto, that had layen ruined almost twenty yeares. The reparation whereof, having been uneffectually attempted by publick collections, was in the end by his own and some few others private free-will-offerings successfully effected. With the remembrance whereof, as of an especiall good work, when a friend went about to comfort him on his deathbed, he made answer, *It is a good work, if it be sprinkled with the bloud of Christ*: otherwise then in this respect he could finde nothing to glorie or comfort himself with, neither in this, nor in any other thing.

And these are but a few of many that might be said, which we have chosen to premise as a glance to some parts of the ensuing book, and for an example to the Reader. We conclude all with his own Motto, with which he used to conclude all things that might seem to tend any way to his own honour:

*Lesse then the least of God's mercies.*



## 1. The Church-Porch

### *Perirrhanterium* <sup>1</sup>

THOU, whose sweet youth and early hopes  
inhanche

Thy rate and price, <sup>2</sup> and mark thee for a treasure;

Hearken unto a Verser, who may chance

Ryme thee to good, and make a bait of pleasure.

A verse may finde him, who a sermon flies,

And turn delight into a sacrifice.

Beware of lust: <sup>3</sup> it doth pollute and foul

Whom God in Baptisme washt with his own  
blood.

<sup>1</sup> The word signifies (1) an instrument for sprinkling with lustral water, and (2) the vessel in which the water is contained. It is used here in the former sense. See No. 2. "Superliminare." In W. this poem is simply entitled "The Church-Porch."

<sup>2</sup> The price of thee.—W.

<sup>3</sup> This and the next two stanzas stand in W. as follows:—

Beware of lust (startle not), O beware,  
It makes thy soule a blott; it is a rodd

It blots thy lesson written in thy soul ;  
 The holy lines cannot be understood.  
 How dare those eyes upon a Bible look,  
 Much lesse towards God, whose lust is all  
 their book ?

Abstain wholly,<sup>1</sup> or wed. Thy bounteous Lord  
 Allows thee choise of paths : take no by-ways ;  
 But gladly welcome what he doth afford ;  
 Not grudging, that thy lust hath bounds and staies.  
 Continence hath his joy : weigh both ; and so  
 If rottennesse have more, let Heaven go.

If God had laid all common, certainly  
 Man would have been th' incloser : but since now

Whose twigs are pleasures, and they whip thee bare :  
 It spoils an angel : robs thee of thy God.  
 How dare those eyes upon a Bible looke,  
 Much lesse towards God, whose lust is all their  
 book ?

Abstaine or wedd : if thou canst not abstaine,  
 Yet wedding marrs thy fortune, fast and pray :  
 If this seeme monkish ; think w<sup>ch</sup> brings most paine,  
 Need or incontineny : the first way  
 If thou chuse bravely and rely on God,  
 He'lle make thy wife a blessing, not a rodd.

Let not each fancy make thee to detest  
 A virgin-bed, w<sup>ch</sup> hath a special crowne  
 If it concurr w<sup>th</sup> vertue : doe thy best,  
 And God will show thee how to take the towne,  
 And winn thy selfe : compare the ioyes, and so  
 If rottennes have more lett heaven goe.

<sup>1</sup> The reading "wholly abstaine" has obtained almost universally since 1679.

God hath impal'd us on the contrarie  
 Man breaks the fence, and every ground will  
 plough.

O what were man, might he himself misplace  
 Sure to be crosse he would shift feet and face.

Drink not the third glasse, which thou canst  
 not tame,

When once it is within thee; but before  
 Mayst rule it, as thou list; and poure the shame,  
 Which it would poure on thee, upon the floore.

It is most just to throw that on the ground,  
 Which would throw me there, if I keep the  
 round.

He that is drunken, may his mother kill  
 Bigge with his sister; he hath lost the reins,  
 Is outlawd by himself: all kinde<sup>1</sup> of ill  
 Did with his liquour slide into his veins.

The drunkard forfeits Man, and doth devest  
 All worldly right, save what he hath by beast.<sup>2</sup>

Shall I, to please anothers wine-sprung minde,  
 Lose all mine own? God hath giv'n me a  
 measure

Short of his canne, and bodie; must I finde  
 A pain in that, wherein he findes a pleasure?

<sup>1</sup> Kindes.—W

<sup>2</sup> In W. these two lines stand at the close of the previous stanza in place of the lines "It is most just etc.," and in their place here Herbert has these—

He that has all ill, and can have no good  
 Because no knowledge, is not earth, but mudd.

Stay at the third glasse : if thou lose thy hold,  
Then thou art modest, and the wine grows bold.

If reason move not Gallants, quit the room,  
(All in a shipwrack shift their severall way)  
Let not a common ruine thee intombe :  
Be not a beast in courtesie ; but stay,  
Stay at the third cup, or forego the place.  
Wine above all things doth Gods stamp deface.

Yet, if thou sinne in wine or wantonnesse,  
Boast not thereof; nor make thy shame thy glorie.  
Frailtie gets pardon by submissivenesse ;  
But he that boasts, shuts that out of his storie.  
He makes flat warre with God, and doth defie  
With his poore clod of earth the spacious sky.

Take not his name, who made thy mouth, in vain :  
It gets thee nothing, and hath <sup>1</sup> no excuse.  
Lust and wine plead a pleasure, avarice <sup>2</sup> gain :  
But the cheap swearer through his open sluice  
Lets his soul runne for nought, as little fearing.  
Were I an *Epicure*, I could bate swearing.

When thou dost tell anothers jest, therein  
Omit the oathes, which true wit cannot need :  
Pick out of tales the mirth, but not the sinne.  
He pares his apple, that will cleanly feed.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Has.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Cheating.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *A Priest to the Temple*, c. xxv., where Herbert makes use of the same proverbial expression again. "If there be any ill in the custom that may be severed from the good, he pares the apple, and gives them the clean to feed on."



Play not away the vertue of that name,  
Which is thy best stake, when griefs make  
thee tame.

The cheapest sinnes most dearely punisht are ;  
Because to shun them also is so cheap :  
For we have wit to mark them, and to spare.  
O crumble not away thy souls fair heap.  
If thou wilt die, the gates of hell are broad :  
Pride and full sinnes have made the way a road.

Lie not ; but let thy heart be true to God,  
Thy mouth to it, thy actions to them both :  
Cowards tell lies, and those that fear the rod ;  
The stormie working soul spits lies and froth.  
Dare to be true. Nothing can need a ly :  
A fault, which needs it most, grows two  
thereby.

Flie idlenesse, which yet thou canst not flie  
By dressing, mistressing, and complement.<sup>1</sup>  
If those take up thy day,<sup>2</sup> the sunne will crie  
Against thee : for his light was onely lent.

<sup>1</sup> This line is borrowed by Herbert from Donne's  
poem " To Mr. Tilman, after he had taken orders "—

But if thy gainings do surmount expression,  
Why doth the foolish world scorn that profession  
Whose joyes pass speed ? Why do they think unfit  
That gentry should joyn families with it ?  
As if their days were only to be spent  
In dressing, mistressing, and compliment.

<sup>2</sup> Be all thy day.—W.

God gave thy soul brave wings; put not  
those feathers  
Into a bed, to sleep out all ill weathers.

Art thou a Magistrate? then be severe:  
If studious; copie fair, what time hath blurr'd;  
Redeem truth from his jawes: if souldier,  
Chase brave employments<sup>1</sup> with a naked sword  
Throughout the world. Fool not: for all  
may have,  
If they dare try, a glorious life, or grave.<sup>2</sup>

O England! full of sinne, but most<sup>3</sup> of sloth;  
Spit out thy flegme, and fill thy brest with glorie:  
Thy Gentry bleats, as if thy native cloth  
Transfus'd a sheepishnesse into thy storie:  
Not that they all are so; but that the most  
Are gone to grasse, and in the pasture lost.

This losse springs chiefly from our education.  
Some till their ground, but let weeds choke  
their sonne:

<sup>1</sup> Employment.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Between this and the next stanza, W. adds the following:—

If thou art nothing, think what thou wouldst bee:  
He that desires is more then halfe y<sup>e</sup> way:  
But if thou coole, then take some shame to thee,  
Desire and shame will make thy labour play.

This is Earth's language, for if heaven come in,  
Thou hast run all thy race ere thou beginn.

<sup>3</sup> Full of all sinn, most.—W.

Some mark a partridge, never their childes  
fashion :

Some ship them over, and the thing is done.

Studie this art, make it thy great designe ;

And if God's image move thee not, let thine.

Some great estates provide, but doe not breed  
A mast'ring minde ; so both are lost thereby :  
Or els they breed them tender, make them need  
All that they leave : <sup>1</sup> this is flat povertie.

For he, that needs five thousand pound to live,  
Is full as poore as he, that needs but five.

The way to make thy sonne rich, is to fill  
His minde with rest, before his trunk <sup>2</sup> with  
riches :

For wealth without contentment, climbs a hill  
To feel those tempests, which fly over ditches.

But if thy sonne can make ten pound his measure,  
Then all thou addest may be call'd his treasure.

When thou dost purpose ought, (within thy power)  
Be sure to doe it, though it be but small :

Constancie knits the bones, and makes us stowre, <sup>3</sup>  
When wanton pleasures becken us to thrall.

<sup>1</sup> All that is left.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Trunks.—W.

<sup>3</sup> So all the early printed editions ; but both the MSS. (B. and W.) read *sovre*. “Halliwell, in his *Dictionary of Archaisms and Provincialisms*, quotes from Palsgrave, tutor to Princess Mary, daughter of Henry VIII., and author of the first French Grammar written in English, the following :—‘Stowre, rude as coarse cloth is, *gros*.’”—Lowe.

Who breaks his own bond, forfeiteth himself :  
 What nature made a ship, he makes a shelf.<sup>1</sup>

Doe all things like a man, not sneakingly :  
 Think the king sees thee still ; for his King  
 does.

Simpring is but a lay-hypocrisie :  
 Give it a corner, and the clue undoes.

Who fears to do ill, sets himself to task :  
 Who fears to do well, sure should wear a  
 mask.

Look to thy mouth ; diseases enter there.  
 Thou hast two sconses,<sup>2</sup> if thy stomack call ;  
 Carve, or discourse ; do not a famine fear.  
 Who carves, is kind to two ; who talks, to all.  
 Look on meat, think it dirt, then eat a bit ;  
 And <sup>3</sup> say withall, Earth to earth I commit.

Slight those who say amidst their sickly healths,  
 Thou liv'st by rule. What doth <sup>4</sup> not so, but  
 man ?

Houses are built by rule, and common-wealths.  
 Entice the trusty sunne, if that you <sup>5</sup> can,  
 From his Ecliptick line : becken the skie.  
 Who lives by rule then, keeps good companie.

<sup>1</sup> And though hee bee a ship, is his owne shelf.—  
 W. "Shelf" here = "reef." Cf. No. 76. "Miserie,"  
 l. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Sconses, *i. e.* bulwarks, or protections, Instead  
 of these words, W. has—Tast all, but feed not.

<sup>3</sup> But.—W.      <sup>4</sup> Does.—W.      <sup>5</sup> Thou.—W.

Who keeps no guard upon himself, is slack,  
And rots to nothing at the next great thaw.  
Man is a shop of rules, a well-truss'd pack,  
Whose every parcell under-writes a law.

Lose not thy self, nor give thy humours  
way :

God gave them to thee under lock and key.

By all means use sometimes to be alone.  
Salute thy self: see what thy soul doth wear.  
Dare to look in thy chest; for 'tis thine own:  
And tumble up and down what thou find'st  
there.

Who cannot rest till hee good fellows finde,  
He breaks up house, turns out of doores his  
minde.

Be thriftie, but not covetous: therefore give  
Thy need, thine honour, and thy friend his  
due.

Never was scraper brave man. Get to live;  
Then live, and use it: els, it is not true  
That thou hast gotten. Surely use alone  
Makes money not a contemptible stone.

Never exceed thy income. Youth may make  
Ev'n with the yeare: but age, if it will hit,  
Shoots a bow short, and lessens still his stake,  
As the day lessens, and his life with it.

Thy children, kindred, friends upon thee  
call;

Before thy journey fairly part with all.

Yet<sup>1</sup> in thy thriving still misdoubt some evil ;  
 Lest gaining gain on thee, and make thee dimme  
 To all things els. Wealth is the conjurers  
 devil ;

Whom when he thinks he hath, the devil hath  
 him.

Gold thou mayst safely touch ; but if it stick  
 Unto thy hands, it woundeth to the quick.

What skills it, if a bag of stones or gold  
 About thy neck do drown thee ? raise thy head ;  
 Take starres for money ; starres not to be told  
 By any art, yet to be purchased.

None is so wastefull as the scraping dame.

She loseth three for one ; her soul, rest, fame.

By no means runne in debt : take thine own  
 measure.

Who cannot live on twentie pound a yeare,  
 Cannot on fourtie : he's a man of pleasure,  
 A kinde of thing that's for it self too deare.

The curious unthrift makes his cloth<sup>2</sup> too  
 wide,

And spares himself, but would his taylor  
 chide.

<sup>1</sup> In W. this stanza is as follows :—

Yett in thy pursing still thy self distrust,  
 Least gaining gaine on thee, and fill thy hart :

Wch if it cleave to coine, one common rust

Will canker both, yett thou alone shalt smart :

One common waight will press downe both,  
 yet so

As that thy self alone to hell shall goe.

<sup>2</sup> Clothes.—W.

Spend not on hopes. They that by pleading  
clothes<sup>1</sup>

Do fortunes seek, when worth and service fail,  
Would have their tale beleev'd for their oathes,  
And are like empty vessels under sail.

Old courtiers know this; therefore set out so,  
As<sup>2</sup> all the day thou mayst hold out to go.

In clothes, cheap handsomenesse doth bear the  
bell.<sup>3</sup>

Wisedome's a trimmer thing, then shop e're  
gave.

Say not then, This with that lace will do well;  
But, This with my discretion will be brave.

Much curiousnesse is a perpetuall wooing  
Nothing with labour; folly long a doing.

Play not for gain, but sport. Who playes for  
more,

Then he can lose with pleasure, stakes his heart;  
Perhaps his wives too, and whom she hath bore:  
Servants and churches also play their part.

Onely a herauld, who that way doth passe,  
Findes his crackt name at length in the  
church-glasse.

If yet thou love game at so deere a rate,  
Learn this, that hath old gamesters deerely cost:

<sup>1</sup> Cloths.—MSS.

<sup>2</sup> That.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the occurrence of the same expression in "The Search," No. 129.

Dost lose? rise up: dost winne? rise in that  
state.

Who strive to sit out losing hands, are lost.  
Game is a civil gunpowder, in peace  
Blowing up houses with their whole increase.

In conversation boldnesse now bears sway.  
But know, that nothing can so foolish be,  
As empty boldnesse: therefore first assay  
To stuffe thy minde with solid braverie;  
Then march on gallant: get substantiall worth.  
Boldnesse guilds finely, and will set it forth.

Be sweet to all. Is thy complexion sowre?  
Then keep such companie; make them thy  
allay:

Get a sharp wife, a servant that will lowre.  
A stumbler stumbles least in rugged way.  
Command thy self in chief. He lifes warre  
knows,  
Whom all his passions follow, as he goes.

Catch not at quarrels. He that dares not speak  
Plainly and home, is coward of the two.  
Think not thy fame at ev'ry twitch will break:  
By great deeds shew, that thou canst little do;  
And do them not: that shall thy wisdome be;  
And change thy temperance into braverie.

If that thy fame with ev'ry toy be pos'd,  
'Tis a thinne webbe, which poysonous fanciës  
make:



But the great souldiers honour was compos'd  
Of thicker stuffe, which would endure a shake.

Wisdome picks friends; civilitie playes the  
rest.

A toy shunn'd cleanly passeth with the best.<sup>1</sup>

Laugh not too much: the wittie man laughs  
least:

For wit is newes onely to ignorance.

Lesse at thine own things laugh; lest in the jest  
Thy person share, and the conceit advance.<sup>2</sup>

Make not thy sport, abuses: for the fly  
That feeds on dung, is coloured thereby.

Pick out of mirth, like stones out of thy ground,  
Profanenesse, filthinesse, abusivenesse.

These are the scumme, with which coarse wits  
abound:

The fine may spare these well, yet not go lesse.

All things are bigge with jest: nothing that's  
plain,

But may be wittie, if thou hast the vein.

Wit's an unruly engine, wildly striking  
Sometimes a friend, sometimes the engineer.

Hast thou the knack? pamper it not with liking:  
But if thou want it, buy it not too deere.

Many affecting wit beyond their power,  
Have got to be a deare fool for an houre.

<sup>1</sup> Is same's interest.—W.

<sup>2</sup> And thou thy mirth inhance.—W.

A sad wise valour is the brave complexion,  
 That leads the van, and swallows up the cities.  
 The gigler is a milk-maid, whom infection,  
 Or a fir'd beacon frighteth from his ditties.

Then he's the sport: the mirth then in him  
 rests,

And the sad man is cock of all his jests.

Towards great persons use respective<sup>1</sup> boldnesse:  
 That temper gives them theirs, and yet doth take  
 Nothing from thine: in service, care, or cold-  
 nesse

Doth ratably thy fortunes marre or make.

Feed no man in his sinnes: for adulation

Doth make thee<sup>2</sup> parcell-devil in damnation.

Envie not greatnesse: for thou mak'st thereby  
 Thy self the worse, and so the distance greater.  
 Be not thine own worm: yet such jealousie,  
 As hurts not others, but may make thee better,  
 Is a good spurre. Correct thy passions spite;  
 Then may the beasts draw thee to happy  
 light.

When basenesse is exalted,<sup>3</sup> do not bate  
 The place its honour, for the persons sake.  
 The shrine is that which thou dost venerate;  
 And not the beast, that bears it on his back.

I care not though the cloth of state should be  
 Not of rich arras, but mean tapestrie.

<sup>1</sup> Respectfull.—W.

<sup>2</sup> You.—B.

<sup>3</sup> When base men are exalted.—W.

Thy friend put in thy bosome : wear his eies  
 Still in thy heart, and he may see what's there.  
 If cause require, thou art his sacrifice ;  
 Thy drops of bloud must pay down all his fear :  
 But love is lost ; the way<sup>1</sup> of friendship's  
 gone,  
 Though *David* had his *Jonathan*, *Christ* his  
*John*.

Yet be not surety, if thou be a father.  
 Love is a personall debt. I cannot give  
 My childrens right, nor ought he take it : rather  
 Both friends should die, then hinder them to live.  
 Fathers first enter bonds to natures ends ;  
 And are her sureties, ere they are a friends.

If thou be single, all thy goods and ground  
 Submit to love ; but yet not more then all.  
 Give one estate, as one life. None is bound  
 To work for two, who<sup>2</sup> brought himself to  
 thrall.

God made me one man ; love makes me no  
 more,  
 Till labour come, and make my weaknesse  
 score.

In thy discourse, if thou desire to please :  
 All such is courteous, usefull, new, or wittie.  
 Usefulnessse comes by labour, wit by ease ;  
 Courtesie grows in<sup>3</sup> court ; news in the citie.

<sup>1</sup> The art.—W.

That.—W.

<sup>3</sup> At.—W.

Get a good stock of these, then draw the  
card ;

That suites him best, of whom thy speech is  
heard.

Entice all neatly to what they know best ;  
For so thou dost thy self and him a pleasure :  
(But a proud ignorance will lose his rest,  
Rather then shew his cards) steal from his  
treasure

What to ask further. Doubts well rais'd do  
lock

The speaker to thee, and preserve thy stock.

If thou be Master-gunner, spend not all  
That thou canst speak, at once ; but husband it,  
And give men turns of speech : do not forestall  
By lavishnesse thine own, and others wit,

As if thou mad'st thy will. A civil guest  
Will no more talk all, then eat all the feast.

Be calm in arguing : for fiercenesse makes  
Errour a fault, and truth discourtesie.

Why should I feel another mans mistakes  
More, then his sicknesses or povertie ?

In love I should : but anger is not love,  
Nor wisdome neither : therefore gently move.

Calmnesse is great advantage : he that lets  
Another chafe, may warm him at his fire :  
Mark all his wandrings, and enjoy his frets ;  
As cunning fencers suffer heat to tire.

Truth dwels not in the clouds : the bow that's  
there,<sup>1</sup>  
Doth often aim at, never hit the sphere.

Mark what another sayes : for many are  
Full of themselves, and answer their own notion.  
Take all into thee ; then with equall care  
Ballance each dramme of reason, like a potion.  
If truth be with thy friend, be with them  
both :  
Share in the conquest, and confesse a troth.

Be usefull where thou livest, that they may  
Both want, and wish thy pleasing presence  
still.<sup>2</sup>  
Kindnesse, good parts, great places are the way  
To compasse this. Finde out mens wants and  
will,  
And meet them there. All worldly joyes go  
lesse  
To the<sup>3</sup> one joy of doing kindnesses.

Pitch thy behaviour low, thy projects high ;  
So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be :  
Sink not in spirit : who aimeth at the sky,  
Shoots higher much then he that means a tree.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> That bow doth hitt  
No more then passion, when shee talkes of it.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Need and bee glad, and wish thy presence still.  
—W.

<sup>3</sup> That.—W.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. "The Author to the Reader" in *A Priest to the Temple*: "He shoots higher that threatens the moon, than he that aims at a tree."

A grain of glorie mixt with humblenesse  
Cures both a fever and lethargicknesse.<sup>1</sup>

Let thy minde still be bent, still plotting where,  
And when, and how the businesse may be done.  
Slacknesse breeds worms; but the sure traveller,  
Though he alight sometimes, still goeth on.

Active and stirring spirits live alone.

Write on the others, Here lies such a one.

Slight not the smallest losse, whether it be  
In love or honour: take account of all;  
Shine like the sunne in every corner: see  
Whether thy stock of credit swell, or fall.

Who say, I care not, those I give for lost; <sup>2</sup>

And to instruct them, 'twill not quit the  
cost.

Scorn no mans love, though of a mean degree;  
(Love is a present for a mightie <sup>3</sup> king)  
Much lesse make any one thine <sup>4</sup>emie.

As gunnes destroy, so may a little sling.<sup>5</sup>

The cunning workman never doth refuse

The meanest tool, that he may chance to use.

All forrain wisdomes doth amount to this,  
To take all that is given; whether wealth,

<sup>1</sup> A drowsiness.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Those I give for gone:

They dye in holes where glory never shone.—W.

<sup>3</sup> The greatest.—W.

<sup>4</sup> Thy.—W.

<sup>5</sup> As swords cause death, so may a little sting.—W.

Or love, or language ; nothing comes amisse :  
 A good digestion turneth all to health :  
 And then as farre as fair behaviour may,  
 Strike off all scores ; none are so cleare as  
 they.

Keep all thy native good, and naturalize  
 All forrain of that name ; but scorn their ill :  
 Embrace their activenessse, not vanities.  
 Who follows all things, forfeiteth his will.  
 If thou observest strangers in each fit,  
 In time they'l runne thee out of all thy wit.

Affect<sup>1</sup> in things about thee cleanlinesse,  
 That all may gladly board thee, as a flowre.  
 Slovens take up their stock of noisomnesse  
 Beforehand, and anticipate their last houre.  
 Let thy mindes sweetnesste have his operation  
 Upon thy body, clothes, and habitation.

In Almes regard thy means, and others merit.  
 Think heav'n a better bargain, then to give  
 Onely thy single market-money for it.  
 Joyn hands with God to make a man to live.

<sup>1</sup> In place of this stanza W. has the following:—

Leave not thine owne deere cuntry-cleanlines  
 For this French sluttery, w<sup>ch</sup> so currant goes:  
 As if none could bee brave but who profess  
 First to bee slovens, and forsake their nose:  
 Let thy minds sweetnes have his operation  
 Upon thy body, cloths, and habitation.

Give to all something ; to a good poore man,  
Till thou change names, and be where he  
began.

Man is God's image ; but a poore man is  
Christs stamp to boot : both images regard.  
God reckons for him, counts the favour his :  
Write, So much giv'n to God ; thou shalt be  
heard.

Let thy almes go before, and keep heav'ns  
gate

Open for thee ; or both <sup>1</sup> may come too late.

Restore to God his due in tithe and time :  
A tithe purloin'd cankers the whole estate.  
Sundaies observe : think when the bells do  
chime,

'Tis angels musick ; therefore come not late.

God then deals blessings : If a king did so,  
Who would not haste, nay give, to see the  
show ?

Twice on the <sup>2</sup> day his due is understood ;  
For all the week thy food so oft he gave thee.  
Thy cheere is mended ; bate not of the food,  
Because 'tis better, and perhaps may save thee.

Thwart not th' Almighty God : <sup>3</sup> O be not  
crosse.

Fast when thou wilt ; but then 'tis gain, not  
losse.

<sup>1</sup> They.—W.

<sup>2</sup> That.—W.

<sup>3</sup> The mighty God.—W.



Though private prayer be a brave designe,  
 Yet publick hath<sup>1</sup> more promises, more love :  
 And love's a weight to hearts, to eies a signe.  
 We all are but cold suitours ; let us move  
 Where it is warmest. Leave thy six and  
 seven ;  
 Pray with the most : for where most pray, is  
 heaven.

When once thy foot enters the church, be bare.  
 God is more there, then thou : for thou art there  
 Onely by his permission. Then beware,  
 And make thy self all reverence and fear.  
 Kneeling ne're spoil'd silk stocking:<sup>2</sup> quit  
 thy state.  
 All equall are within the churches gate.

Resort to sermons, but to prayers most :  
 Praying 's the end of preaching. O be drest ;  
 Stay not for th' other pin : why thou hast lost  
 A joy for it worth worlds. Thus hell doth jest  
 Away thy blessings,<sup>3</sup> and extreanly flout  
 thee,  
 Thy clothes being fast, but thy soul loose  
 about thee.

In time of service seal up both thine eies,  
 And send them to thine<sup>4</sup> heart ; that spying  
 sinne,

<sup>1</sup> Has.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Stockings.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Our blessings from us.—W.

<sup>4</sup> Thy.—W.

They may weep out the stains by them did rise :  
Those doores being shut, all by the eare comes in.

Who marks in church-time others symmetrie,<sup>1</sup>  
Makes all their beautie his deformitie.

Let vain or <sup>2</sup> busie thoughts have there no part :  
Bring not thy plough, thy plots, thy pleasures  
thither.

Christ purg'd his temple ; so must thou thy  
heart.

All worldly thoughts are but theeves met together  
To couzin thee. Look to thy actions well :  
For churches are either our heav'n or hell.

Judge not the preacher ; for he is thy Judge :  
If thou mislike him, thou conceiv'st him not.  
God calleth preaching folly.<sup>3</sup> Do not grudge  
To pick out treasures from an earthen pot.<sup>4</sup>

The worst speak something good : if all want  
sense,

God takes a text, and preacheth patience.

He that gets patience, and the blessing which  
Preachers conclude with, hath not lost his  
pains.

He that by being at church escapes the ditch,  
Which he might fall in by companions, gains.

1

Others comliness

Turns all their beauty to his ugliness.—W.

2 And.—W.

3 1 Cor. i. 21.

4 Cf. 2 Cor. iv. 7.

He that loves Gods abode, and to combine  
 With saints on earth, shall one day with them  
 shine.

Jest not at preachers language, or expression :  
 How know'st thou, but thy sinnes made him  
 miscarrie ?

Then turn thy faults and his into confession :  
 God sent him, whatsoe're he be : O tarry,  
 And love him for his Master : his condition,  
 Though it be ill, makes him no ill Physician.

None shall in hell such bitter pangs endure,  
 As those, who mock at Gods way of salvation.  
 Whom oil and balsames<sup>1</sup> kill, what salve can  
 cure ?

They drink with greedinesse a full damnation.  
 The Jews refused thunder ; and we, folly.  
 Though God do hedge us in, yet who is holy ?

Summe up at night, what thou hast done by day ;<sup>2</sup>  
 And in the morning, what thou hast to do.  
 Dresse and undresse thy soul : mark the decay  
 And growth of it : if with thy watch, that too  
 Be down, then winde up both, since we shall  
 be  
 Most surely judg'd, make thy accounts agree.

In brief, acquit thee bravely ; play the man.  
 Look not on pleasures as they come, but go.

<sup>1</sup> Mercies.—W.

<sup>2</sup> That day.—W.

Deferre not the least vertue : lifes poore span  
 Make not an ell, by trifling in thy wo.

If thou do ill; the joy fades, not the  
 pains :

If well; the pain doth fade, the joy remains.

## 2. Superliminare <sup>1</sup>

**T**HOU, whom the former precepts have  
 Sprinkled and taught, how to behave  
 Thy self in church; approach, and taste  
 The churches mysticall repast.

**A**VOID profanenesse; <sup>2</sup> come not here :  
 Nothing but holy, pure, and cleare,  
 Or that which groneth to be so,  
 May at his perill further go.

<sup>1</sup> In W. the first four lines of this poem are headed *Perirranterium*; the last four alone being entitled *Superliminare*, i.e. the lintel of the doorway. Cf. Ex. xii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Grosart punctuates thus: "Avoid, profaneness!" This has no authority from the MSS. or early editions, but it serves to bring out what is clearly Herbert's meaning. Profaneness is personified and addressed: "Avoid," being equivalent to "Avaunt!"

## 3. The Altar

A BROKEN A L T A R, Lord, thy servant  
reares,

Made of a heart, and cemented with teares:

Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;

No workmans tool hath touch'd the same.<sup>1</sup>

A H E A R T alone

Is such a stone,

As nothing but

Thy pow'r doth cut.

Wherefore each part

Of my hard heart

Meets in this frame,

To praise thy name.

That if I chance to hold my peace,

These stones to praise thee may not cease.<sup>2</sup>

O let thy blessed S A C R I F I C E be mine,

And sanctifie this A L T A R to be thine.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ex. xx. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. St. Luke xix. 40.

## 4. The Sacrifice

**O**H *all ye*, who passe by, whose eyes and minde  
To worldly things are sharp, but to me  
blinde;

To me, who took eyes that I might you finde :  
Was ever grief like mine ?<sup>1</sup>

The Princes of my people make a head  
Against their Maker : they do wish me dead,  
Who cannot wish, except I give them bread :-  
Was ever grief like mine ?

Without me each one, who doth now me brave,  
Had to this day been an Egyptian slave.  
They use that power against me, which I gave :  
Was ever grief like mine ?

Mine own Apostle, who the bag did beare,  
Though he had all I had, did not forbear  
To sell me also, and to put me there :  
Was ever grief, &c.

For thirtie pence he did my death devise,  
Who at three hundred did the ointment prize,  
Not half so sweet as my sweet sacrifice :  
Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lam. i. 12.

Therefore my soul melts, and my hearts deare  
treasure

Drops bloud (the onely beads) my words to  
measure :

*O let this cup passe, if it be thy pleasure :*

Was ever grief like mine ?

These drops being temper'd with a sinners tears,  
A Balsome are for both the Hemispheres :

Curing all wounds, but mine ; all, but my fears :

Was ever grief, &c.

Yet my Disciples sleep : I cannot gain

One houre of watching ; but their drowsie brain

Comforts not me, and doth my doctrine stain :

Was ever grief, &c.

Arise, arise, they come. Look how they runne.

Alas ! what haste they make to be undone !

How with their lanterns do they seek the sunne !

Was ever grief, &c.

With clubs and staves they seek me, as a thief,

Who am the way of truth,<sup>1</sup> the true relief ;

Most true to those, who are my greatest grief :

Was ever grief, &c.

*Judas*, dost thou betray me with a kisse ?

Canst thou finde hell about my lips ? and misse

Of life, just at the gates of life and blisse ?

Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> The way and truth.—W. Cf. St. John xiv. 6.

See, they lay hold on me, not with the hands  
 Of faith, but furie : yet at their commands  
 I suffer binding, who have loos'd their bands :  
   Was ever grief like mine ?

All my Disciples flie ; fear puts a barre  
 Betwixt my friends and me. They leave the  
                   starre,  
 That brought the wise men of the East from  
                   farre.

Was ever grief, &c.

Then from one ruler to another bound  
 They leade me ; urging, that it was not sound  
 What I taught : Comments would the text  
                   confound.

Was ever grief, &c.

The Priest<sup>1</sup> and rulers all false witsesse seek  
 'Gainst him, who seeks not life, but is the meek  
 And readie Paschal Lambe of this great week :  
   Was ever grief, &c.

Then they accuse me of great blasphemie,  
 That I did thrust into the Deitie,  
 Who never thought that any robbie :<sup>2</sup>  
   Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Priests.—W., and many modern editions since  
 1674.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Phil. ii. 6.



Some said, that I the Temple to the floore  
 In three dayes raz'd, and raised as before.  
 Why, he that built the world can do much more :  
 Was ever grief like mine ?

Then they condemne me all with that same breath,  
 Which I do give them daily, unto death.  
 Thus *Adam* my first breathing rendereth :<sup>1</sup>  
 Was ever grief, &c.

They binde, and leade me unto *Herod* : he  
 Sends me to *Pilate*. This makes them agree ;  
 But yet their friendship is my enmitie :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

*Herod* and all his bands do set me light,  
 Who teach all hands to warre, fingers to fight,  
 And onely am the Lord of hosts and might :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

*Herod* in judgement sits, while I do stand ;  
 Examines me with a censorious hand :  
 I him obey, who all things else command :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

The *Jews* accuse me with despitefulnesse ;  
 And vying malice with my gentlenesse,  
 Pick quarrels with their onely happinesse :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gen. ii. 7.

I answer nothing, but with patience prove  
 If stonie hearts will melt with gentle love.  
 But who does hawk at eagles with a dove?  
 Was ever grief like mine?

My silence rather doth augment their crie;  
 My dove doth back into my bosome flie,  
 Because the raging waters still are high:<sup>1</sup>  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Heark how they crie aloud still, *Crucifie*:  
*It is not fit he live a day*, they crie,  
 Who cannot live lesse then eternally:  
 Was ever grief, &c.

*Pilate* a stranger holdeth off; but they,  
 Mine owne deare people, cry, *Away, away*,  
 With noises confused frightening the day:  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Yet still they shout, and crie, and stop their eares,  
 Putting my life among their sinnes and fears,  
 And therefore with *my bloud on them and theirs*:  
 Was ever grief, &c.

See how spite cankers things. These words  
 aright  
 Used, and wished, are the whole worlds light:  
 But hony is their gall, brightnesse their night:  
 Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gen. viii. 8, 9.

They choose a murderer, and all agree  
 In him to do themselves a courtesie :  
 For it was their own cause<sup>1</sup> who killed me :  
 Was ever grief like mine ?

And a seditious murderer he was :  
 But I the Prince of peace ;<sup>2</sup> peace that doth passe  
 All understanding,<sup>3</sup> more then heav'n doth  
 glasse :<sup>4</sup>  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Why, Cesar is their onely King, not I :  
 He clave the stonie rock, when they were drie ;<sup>5</sup>  
 But surely not their hearts, as I well trie :<sup>6</sup>  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Ah ! how they scourge me ! yet my tendernesse  
 Doubles each lash : and yet their bitternesse  
 Windes up my grief to a mysteriousnesse :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

They buffet me,<sup>7</sup> and box me<sup>7</sup> as they list,  
 Who grasp<sup>8</sup> the earth and heaven with my<sup>9</sup> fist,  
 And never yet, whom I<sup>10</sup> would punish, miss'd :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Case.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. ix. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. iv. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Then heaven, glasse.—W.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ex. xvii. 6.

<sup>6</sup> But not their harts, as I by prooffe do try.—W.

<sup>7</sup> Him.—MSS.

<sup>8</sup> Grasps.—W.

<sup>9</sup> His.—MSS.

<sup>10</sup> He.—MSS.

Behold, they spit on me in scornfull wise,  
 Who by my spittle gave the blinde man eies,<sup>1</sup>  
 Leaving his blindnesse to mine enemies :  
 Was ever grief like mine ?

My face they cover, though it be divine.  
 As *Moses* face was veiled,<sup>2</sup> so is mine,  
 Lest on their double-dark souls either shine :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Servants and abjects flout me ; they are wittie :  
*Now prophesie who strikes thee*, is their dittie.  
 So they in me denie themselves all pitie :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

And now I am deliver'd unto death,  
 Which each one cals for so with utmost breath,  
 That he before me well nigh suffereth :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Weep not, deare friends, since I for both have  
 wept  
 When all my tears were bloud, the while you  
 slept :  
 Your tears for your own fortunes should be kept :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

The souldiers lead me to the common hall ;  
 There they deride me, they abuse me all :  
 Yet for twelve heav'nly legions I could call :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> St. John ix. 6.      <sup>2</sup> Ex. xxxiv. 33 ; 2 Cor. iii. 13.

Then with a scarlet robe they me aray ;  
Which shews my bloud to be the onely way,  
And cordiall left to repair mans decay :  
Was ever grief like mine ?

Then on my head a crown of thorns I wear :  
For these are all the grapes *Sion* doth bear,  
Though I my vine planted and watred there :  
Was ever grief, &c.

So sits the earths great curse in *Adams* fall<sup>1</sup>  
Upon my head : so I remove it all  
From th' earth unto my brows, and bear the  
thrall :  
Was ever grief, &c.

Then with the reed they gave to me before,<sup>2</sup>  
They strike my head, the rock<sup>3</sup> from whence  
all store  
Of heav'nly blessings issue evermore :<sup>4</sup>  
Was ever grief, &c.

They bow their knees to me, and cry, *Hail king* :  
What ever scoffes or<sup>5</sup> scornfulnesse can bring,  
I am the floore, the sink, where they it fling :  
Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Gave mee heretofore.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. x. 4.

<sup>4</sup> To the poore.—W.

<sup>5</sup> And.—W.

Yet<sup>1</sup> since mans scepters are as frail as reeds,  
 And thorny all their crowns, bloudie their  
 weeds;<sup>2</sup>

I, who am Truth, turn into truth their deeds:  
 Was ever grief like mine?

The souldiers also spit upon that<sup>3</sup> face,  
 Which<sup>4</sup> Angels did desire to have the grāce,  
 And Prophets once to see, but found no place:  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Thus trimmed forth they bring me to the rout,  
 Who *Crucifie him*, crie with one strong shout.  
 God holds his peace at man, and man cries out:<sup>5</sup>  
 Was ever grief, &c.

They leade me in once more, and putting then  
 Mine own clothes on, they leade me out agen.  
 Whom devils flie, thus is he toss'd of men:  
 Was ever grief, &c.

And now wearie of sport, glad to ingrosse  
 All spite in one, counting my life their losse,  
 They carrie me to my most bitter crosse:  
 Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> In W. this stanza is as follows:—

Yet since in frailty, cruelty shrowd turns,  
 Allscepters, Reeds: Cloths, Scarlet: crowns are thorns,  
 I, who am Truth, turne into truth their scorns:  
 Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.* garments.      <sup>3</sup> My.—W.      <sup>4</sup> Whom.—W.

<sup>5</sup> With stronger blows strike mee as I come out  
 —W.

My crosse I bear my self, untill I faint :  
 Then Simon bears it for me by constraint,  
 The decreed burden of each mortall Saint :<sup>1</sup>  
 Was ever grief like mine ?

*O all ye who passe by, behold and see ;*  
 Man stole the fruit, but I must climbe the tree ;  
 The tree of life to all, but onely me :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Lo, here I hang, charg'd with a world of sinne,  
 The greater world o' th' two ; for that came in  
 By words, but this by sorrow I must win :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Such sorrow, as if sinfull man could feel,  
 Or feel his part,<sup>2</sup> he would not cease to kneel,  
 Till all were melted, though he were all steel :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

But, *O my God, my God!* why leav'st thou me,  
 The sonne, in whom thou dost delight to be ?<sup>3</sup>  
*My God, my God*——  
 Never was grief like mine.

Shame tears my soul, my bodie many a wound ;<sup>4</sup>  
 Sharp nails pierce this, but sharper that confound ;  
 Reproches, which are free, while I am bound.  
 Was ever grief like mine ?

<sup>1</sup> The gladsome burden of a mortal saint.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Share.—W.      <sup>3</sup> Art well-pleased to be.—W.

<sup>4</sup> My soule is full of shame, my flesh of wound.—W.

Now heal thy self, Physician ; now come down.  
 Alas ! I did so, when I left my crown  
 And fathers smile for you, to feel his frown :<sup>1</sup>  
 Was ever grief like mine ?

In healing not my self, there doth consist  
 All that salvation, which ye<sup>2</sup> now resist ;  
 Your safetie in my sicknesse doth subsist :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

Betwixt two theeves I spend my utmost breath,  
 As he that for some robbetrie suffereth.  
 Alas ! what have I stollen from you ? death :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

A king my title is, prefixt on high ;  
 Yet by my subjects am condemn'd to die  
 A servile death in servile companie :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

They gave me vineger mingled with gall,  
 But more with malice : yet, when they did call,  
 With Manna, Angels food, I fed them all :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

They part my garments, and by lot dispose  
 My coat, the type of love, which once cur'd those  
 Who sought for help, never malicious foes :  
 Was ever grief, &c.

<sup>1</sup> And fathers smile to feele for you his frowne.—W.

<sup>2</sup> You.—W.



Nay, after death their spite shall further go ;  
 For they will pierce my side, I full well know ;  
 That as sinne came, so Sacraments might flow :  
   Was ever grief like mine ?

But now I die ; now all is finished.  
 My wo, mans weal : and now I bow my head.  
 Onely let others say, when I am dead,  
   Never was grief like mine.

## 5. The Thanksgiving

**O**H King of grief ! <sup>1</sup> (a title strange, yet true,  
   To thee of all kings onely due)

Oh King of wounds ! <sup>2</sup> how shall I grieve for thee,  
   Who in all grief preventest me ?

Shall I weep bloud ? why thou hast wept such  
   store

  That all thy body was one doore. <sup>3</sup>

Shall I be scourged, flouted, boxed, sold ?

  'Tis but to tell the tale is told.

*My God, my God, why dost thou part from me ?*

  Was such a grief as cannot be.

Shall I then sing, skipping, thy dolefull storie, <sup>4</sup>

  And side with thy triumphant glorie ?

<sup>1</sup> King of all grief.—W.

<sup>2</sup> King of all wounds.—W.

<sup>3</sup> This, the true reading, is found in both the MSS., though the misprint “gore” has widely obtained since the edition of 1679, in which it first appears.

<sup>4</sup> Skipping thy dolefull story.—B. ; neglecting thy sad story.—W.

Shall thy strokes be my stroking? thorns, my  
flower?

Thy rod, my posie? crosse, my bower?  
But how then shall I imitate thee, and

Copie thy fair, though bloudie hand?  
Surely I will reuenge me on thy love,

And trie who shall victorious prove.  
If thou dost give me wealth; I will restore  
All back unto thee by<sup>1</sup> the poore.

If thou dost give me honour; men shall see,  
The<sup>2</sup> honour doth belong to thee.

I will not marry; or, if she be mine,  
She and her children shall be thine.

My bosome friend, if he blaspheme thy name,  
I will tear thence<sup>3</sup> his love and fame.

One half of me being gone, the rest I give<sup>4</sup>  
Unto some Chappell, die or live.

As for thy<sup>5</sup> passion—But of that anon,  
When with the other I have done.

For thy predestination I'll contrive,  
That three yeares hence, if I survive,  
I'll build a spittle,<sup>6</sup> or mend common wayes,  
But mend mine<sup>7</sup> own without delays.

Then I will use the works of thy creation,  
As if I us'd them but for fashion.

The world and I will quarrell; and the  
yeare

Shall not perceiue, that I am here.

<sup>1</sup> In.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Out.—W.

<sup>5</sup> The misprint "my" (found in many editions)  
originated in 1679.

<sup>6</sup> *I.e.* 'spital or hospital.

<sup>2</sup> That.—W.

<sup>4</sup> I'll give.—W.

<sup>7</sup> My.—W.

My musick shall finde thee, and ev'ry string  
 Shall have his attribute to sing;<sup>1</sup>  
 That all together may accord in thee,  
 And prove one God, one harmonie.  
 If thou shalt give me wit, it shall appeare,  
 If thou hast giv'n it me, 'tis here.  
 Nay, I will reade thy book, and never move  
 Till I have found therein thy love;<sup>2</sup>  
 Thy art of love, which I'le turn back on thee,  
 O my deare Saviour, Victorie!  
 Then for thy passion—I will do for that—  
 Alas, my God, I know not what.

## 6. The Reprisall<sup>3</sup>

I HAVE consider'd it, and finde  
 There is no dealing<sup>4</sup> with thy mighty passion:  
 For though I die for thee, I am behinde;  
 My sinnes deserve the condemnation.

<sup>1</sup> See Walton's *Life*, p. cii, for Herbert's use of these lines on the Sunday before his death.

<sup>2</sup> And never linn  
 Till I have found thy love therein.—W.

*Linn*, *i. e.* "cease" or "give over." The word was common in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in this sense. It is used by Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, Bk. III. Canto iii. st. 30, and more than once by Milton in his prose works, *e. g.* on *Divorce*, Bk. I. Pref.

<sup>3</sup> In W. the title is "The Second Thanksgiving." Cf. "The Thanksgiving," l. 29, 30.

<sup>4</sup> Medling.—W.

O make me innocent, that I  
 May give a disentangled state and free :  
 And yet thy wounds still my attempts defie,  
 For by thy death I die for thee.

Ah! was it not enough that thou  
 By thy eternall glorie didst outgo me ?  
 Couldst thou not griefs sad conquests me allow,  
 But in all vict'ries overthrow me ?

Yet by confession will I come  
 Into the<sup>1</sup> conquest. Though I can do nought  
 Against thee, in thee will I overcome  
 The man, who once against thee fought.

## 7. The Agonie

**P**HILOSOPHERS have measur'd  
 mountains,  
 Fathom'd the depths of seas, of states, and kings,  
 Walk'd with a staffe to heav'n, and traced  
 fountains :

But there are two vast, spacious things,  
 The which to measure it doth more behove :  
 Yet few there are that found them ; Sinne and  
 Love.

Who would know Sinne, let him repair  
 Unto Mount Olivet ; there shall he see  
 A man so wrung with pains, that all his hair,  
 His skinne, his garments bloudie be,

<sup>1</sup> Thy.—W.

Sinne is that presse and vice, which forceth pain  
To hunt his cruell food through ev'ry vein.

Who knows not Love, let him assay  
And taste that juice, which on the crosse a pike  
Did set again abroach; then let him say  
If ever he did taste the like.

Love is that liquor sweet and most divine,  
Which my God feels as bloud; but I, as wine.

## 8. The Sinner

**L**ORD, how I am all ague, when I seek  
What I have treasur'd in my memorie!  
Since, if my soul make even with the  
week,

Each seventh note by right is due to thee.

I finde there quarries of pil'd vanities,

But shreds of holinesse, that dare not  
venture

To shew their face, since crosse to thy  
decrees:

There the circumference earth is, heav'n the  
centre.

In so much dregs the quintessence is small:

The spirit and good extract of my heart

Comes to about the many hundredth part.

Yet Lord restore thine image, heare my call:

And though my hard heart scarce to  
thee can grone,

Remember that thou once didst write in  
stone.

## 9. Good Friday

O MY chief good,  
 How shall I measure out thy bloud?  
 How shall I count what thee befell,  
 And each grief tell?

Shall I thy woes  
 Number according to thy foes?  
 Or, since one starre show'd thy first breath,  
 Shall all thy death?

Or shall each leaf,  
 Which falls in Autumne, score a grief?  
 Or cannot leaves, but fruit, be signe  
 Of the true vine?

Then let each houre  
 Of my whole life one grief devoure;  
 That thy distresse through all may runne,  
 And be my sunne.

Or rather let  
 My severall sinnes their sorrows get;  
 That as each beast his cure doth know,  
 Each sinne may so.

Since <sup>1</sup> blood is fittest, Lord, to write  
 Thy sorrows in, and bloudie fight ;  
 My heart hath store, write there, where in  
 One box doth lie both ink and sinne :

That when sinne spies so many foes,  
 Thy whips, thy nails, thy wounds, thy woes,  
 All come to lodge there, sinne <sup>2</sup> may say,  
*No room for me, and flie away.*

Sinne <sup>3</sup> being gone, oh fill the place,  
 And keep possession with thy grace ;  
 Lest sinne take courage and return,  
 And all the writings blot or burn.

<sup>1</sup> In W. this is a separate poem, and is entitled  
 "The Passion." The opening lines of it are as  
 follows :—

Since nothing, Lord can bee so good  
 To write thy sorrows in as blood.

<sup>2</sup> He.—W.

<sup>3</sup> In W. this stanza is as follows :—

Sinn being gone, O, doe thou fill  
 The place, and keep possession still :  
 For by the writings all may see  
 'Thou hast an ancient claime to mee.

10. Redemption <sup>1</sup>.

**H**AVING been tenant long to a rich Lord  
 Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,  
 And make a suit unto him, to afford  
 A new small-rented lease, and cancell th' old.

In heaven at his manour I him sought :  
 They told me there, that he was lately  
     gone  
 About some land, which he had dearly  
     bought  
 Long since on earth, to take possession.

I straight return'd, and knowing his great birth,  
 Sought him accordingly in great resorts ;  
 In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and  
     courts :  
 At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth

Of theeves and murderers : there I him  
     espied,  
 Who straight, *Your suit is granted*, said,  
     and died.

<sup>1</sup> "The Passion."—W.



## I I. Sepulchre

O BLESSED bodie! Whither art thou  
thrown?

No lodging for thee, but a cold hard stone?

So many hearts on earth, and yet not one

Receive thee?

Sure there is room within our hearts good store;

For they can lodge transgressions by the score:

Thousands of toys dwell there, yet out of doore

They leave thee.

But that which shews them large, shews them  
unfit.

What ever sinne did this pure rock commit,

Which holds thee now? Who hath indited it

Of murder?

Where our hard hearts have took up stones to  
brain thee,

And missing this, most falsly did arraigne thee;

Onely these stones in quiet entertain thee,

And order.

And as of old, the law by heav'nly art

Was writ in stone; so thou, which also art

The letter of the word, find'st no fit heart

To hold thee.

Yet do we still persist as we began,  
 And so should perish, but that nothing can,  
 Though it be cold, hard, foul, from loving man  
 Withhold thee.

## 12. Easter

**R**ISE heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his  
 praise  
 Without delayes,  
 Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise  
 With him mayst rise:  
 That, as his death calcined thee to dust,  
 His life may make thee gold, and much more  
 just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part  
 With all thy art.  
 The crosse taught all wood to resound his name,  
 Who bore the same.  
 His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key  
 Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song  
 Pleasant and long:  
 Or since all musick is but three parts vied  
 And multiplied;  
 O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,  
 And make up our defects with his sweet art.

I<sup>1</sup> got me flowers to straw thy way ;  
 I got me boughs off many a tree :  
 But thou wast up by break of day,  
 And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sunne arising in the East,  
 Though he give light, and th' East perfume ;  
 If they should offer to contest  
 With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,  
 Though many sunnes to shine endeavour ?  
 We count three hundred, but we misse :  
 There is but one, and that one ever.

<sup>1</sup> The remaining stanzas, which clearly form the  
 "song" called for above, are given in W. in a  
 different form :

I had prepared many a flowre  
 To strow thy way and victorie ;  
 But thou wast up before myne houre,  
 Bringinge thy sweets along with thee.

The sunn arising in the East,  
 Thou hee bring light and th' other sents,  
 Can not make up so brave a feast  
 As thy discouerie presents.

Yet though my flours be lost, they say  
 A hart can never come too late ;  
 Teach it to sing thy praise this day,  
 And then this day my life shall date.

## 13. Easter wings

LORD, who createdst man in wealth and store,  
Though foolishly he lost the same,  
Decaying more and more,  
Till he became  
Most poore :  
With thee  
O let me rise  
As larks, harmoniously,  
And sing this day thy victories :  
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

## Easter wings

My tender age in sorrow did beginne :  
And still with sicknesses and shame  
Thou didst so punish sinne,  
That I became  
Most thinne.  
With thee  
Let me combine,  
And feel this day <sup>1</sup> thy victorie :  
For, if I imp my wing on thine,  
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

<sup>1</sup> W. omits "this day."

14. H. Baptisme<sup>1</sup>

AS he that sees a dark and shadie grove,  
 Stayes not, but looks beyond it on the skie;  
 So when I view my sinnes, mine eyes remove  
 More backward still, and to that water flie,

Which is above the heav'ns, whose spring and rent  
 Is in my deare Redeemers pierced side.<sup>2</sup>

O blessed streams! either ye do prevent  
 And stop our sinnes from growing thick and wide,

Or else give tears to drown them, as they grow.

In you Redemption measures all my time,  
 And spreads the plaister equall to the crime:  
 You taught the book of life my name, that so

What ever future sinnes should me miscall,  
 Your first acquaintance might discredit all.

<sup>1</sup> A different form of this poem is given in W.:

When backward on my sins I turne mine eyes,  
 And then beyond them all my Baptisme view,  
 As he y<sup>t</sup> heaven beyond much thicket spyes:  
 I pass y<sup>e</sup> shades, and fixe vpon the true  
 Waters above y<sup>e</sup> heavens: O sweet streams,  
 You doe prevent most sins, and for y<sup>e</sup> rest  
 You give us tears to wash them: lett those beams,  
 W<sup>ch</sup> then ioin'd w<sup>th</sup> you, still meet in my brest,  
 And mend, as rising starrs and rivers doe.  
 In you Redemption measures all my tyme,  
 Spredding y<sup>e</sup> plaister equal to y<sup>e</sup> cryme.  
 You taught y<sup>e</sup> book of life my name, that so  
 Whatever future sinns should mee miscall,  
 Yo<sup>r</sup> first acquaintance might discredit all.

<sup>2</sup> St. John xix. 34. Cf. "The Sacrifice," l. 247.

## 15. H. Baptisme

SINCE, Lord, to thee  
 A narrow way and little gate<sup>1</sup>  
 Is all the passage, on my infancie  
 Thou didst lay hold, and antedate  
 My faith in me.

O let me still  
 Write thee great God, and me a childe ;  
 Let me be soft and supple to thy will,  
 Small to my self, to others milde,  
 Behither ill.<sup>2</sup>

Although<sup>3</sup> by stealth  
 My flesh get on, yet let her sister  
 My soul bid nothing, but preserve her<sup>4</sup> wealth :  
 The growth of flesh is but a blister ;  
 Childhood is health.

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. vii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Behither*, i.e. *beyond*, or *except*. The word is similarly used by Barnabas Oley in his "Preface to the Christian Reader," which was prefixed to the second edition of Herbert's *Priest to the Temple*: "I have not observed any one thing, behither vice, that hath occasioned so much contempt of the clergie as unwillingness to take or keep a poor living."

<sup>3</sup> Though that.—W

<sup>4</sup> Keep her first.—W.





Pulpits and sundayes, sorrow dogging sinne,  
 Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,  
 Fine nets and strategems <sup>1</sup> to catch us in,  
 Bibles laid open, millions of surprises,

Blessings beforehand, tyes of gratefulnesse,  
 The sound of glorie ringing in our eares :  
 Without, our shame ; within, our consciences ;  
 Angels and grace, eternall hopes and fears.

Yet <sup>2</sup> all these fences and their whole array  
 One cunning bosome-sinne blows quite away.

## 18. Affliction

WHEN first thou didst entice to thee my  
 heart,

I thought the service brave :  
 So many joyes I writ down for my part,  
 Besides what I might have  
 Out of my stock of naturall delights,  
 Augmented with thy gracious benefits. <sup>3</sup>

I looked on thy furniture so fine, <sup>4</sup>  
 And made it fine to me :  
 Thy glorious household-stuffe did me entwine, <sup>5</sup>  
 And 'tice me unto thee. <sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Casualties.—W.

<sup>2</sup> In W. the last two lines run thus—

Yet all these fences w<sup>th</sup> one bosome sinn,  
 Are blown away, as if they neer had bin.

<sup>3</sup> Grace's perquisites.—W. <sup>4</sup> Rich.—W.

<sup>5</sup> Bewitch.—W.

<sup>6</sup> Into thy familie.—W.

Such starres I counted mine : both heav'n and  
 earth  
 Payd me my wages in a world of mirth.

What pleasures could I want, whose King I  
 served ?

Where joyes my fellows were.  
 Thus argu'd into hopes, my thoughts reserved  
 No place for grief or fear.<sup>1</sup>  
 Therefore my sudden soul caught at the place,  
 And made her youth and fiercenesse seek thy face.

At first thou gav'st me milk and sweetnesses ;  
 I had my wish and way :  
 My dayes were straw'd with flow'rs and happi-  
 nesse ;  
 There was no moneth but May.  
 But with my yeares sorrow<sup>2</sup> did twist and grow,  
 And made a partie unawares for wo.

My flesh began unto my soul in pain,  
 Sicknesse cleave my bones ;  
 Consuming agues dwell in ev'ry vein,  
 And tune my breath to grones.<sup>3</sup>  
 Sorrow was all my soul ; I scarce beleevd,  
 Till grief did tell me roundly, that I lived.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I was preserved  
 Before that I could feare.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Sorrows.—W.

<sup>3</sup> See Walton's Life, p. liii.

<sup>4</sup> I did not know  
 That I did live but by a pang of woe.—W.

When I got health, thou took'st away my life,  
     And more; for my friends die:<sup>1</sup>  
 My mirth and edge was lost; a blunted knife  
     Was of more use then I.

Thus thinne and lean without a fence or friend,  
 I was blown through<sup>2</sup> with ev'ry storm and  
 winde.

Whereas my birth and spirit rather took  
     The way that takes the town;<sup>3</sup>  
 Thou didst betray me to a lingring book,  
     And wrap me in a gown.  
 I was entangled in the world of strife,  
 Before I had the power to change my life.

Yet, for I threatned oft the siege to raise,  
     Not simpring all mine age,  
 Thou often didst with Academick praise  
     Melt and dissolve my rage.  
 I took thy sweetned pill, till I came neare;  
 I could not go away, nor persevere.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Richmond died in 1623-24; the Marquis of Hamilton in 1625; James i. in the same year, "and with them all Mr. Herbert's Court hopes" (Walton's Life, p. liv). Andrewes and Bacon both died in 1627, and Herbert's mother, Lady Danvers, in 1627.

<sup>2</sup> Thorough.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the occurrence of the same expression in "The Church-Porch," in the version given in W., above, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Till I came, where  
 I could not goe away nor persevere.—W.

Yet lest perchance I should too happie be  
   In my unhappinesse,  
 Turning my purge to food, thou throwest me  
   Into more sicknesses.<sup>1</sup>

Thus doth thy power crosse-bias<sup>2</sup> me, not  
   making  
 Thine own gift good, yet me from my wayes  
   taking.

Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me  
   None of my books will show :  
 I reade, and sigh, and wish I were a tree ;  
   For sure then I should grow  
 To fruit or shade : at least some bird would  
   trust  
 Her houshold to me, and I should be just.

Yet, though thou troublest me, I must be meek ;  
   In weaknesse must be stout.  
 Well, I will change the service, and go seek  
   Some other master out.  
 Ah my deare God !<sup>3</sup> though I am clean forgot,  
 Let me not love thee, if I love thee not.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Walton's Life, p. lxiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Cross-bias me*, i.e. give an inclination athwart my own.

<sup>3</sup> King.—W.

<sup>4</sup> It is told of Archbishop Sharp that "the last words he said were those of Mr. Herbert, 'Ah, my dear God, though I am clean forgot, &c.' He had these words often in his mouth while he was in health ; but would add that Mr. Herbert was much dispirited when he wrote them" (Sharp's *Life of*

## 19. Repentance

LORD, I confesse my sinne is great ;  
 Great is my sinne. Oh ! gently treat  
 With thy quick flow'r, thy momentanie <sup>1</sup>  
 bloom ;

Whose life still pressing  
 Is one undressing,  
 A steadie aiming at a tombe.

Mans age is two houres work, or three :  
 Each day doth round about us see.

Thus are we to delights : but we are all  
 To sorrows old, <sup>2</sup>  
 If life be told  
 From what life feeleth, Adams fall.

O let thy height of mercie then  
 Compassionate short-breathed men.  
 Cut me not off for my most foul transgression :  
 I do confesse  
 My foolishnesse ;  
 My God, accept of my confession.

*Sharp*). The lines seem to mean, "Although forgotten of God, unless my love to him still continues in my desolation, let me never be able to love Him."

See *Palgrave's Treasury of Sacred Song*, p. 333

<sup>1</sup> Momentarie.—MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Looking on this side and beyond us all  
 We are born old.—W.

Sweeten at length this bitter bowl,  
 Which thou hast pour'd into my soul ;  
 Thy wormwood turn to health, windes to fair  
 weather :

For if thou stay,  
 I and this day,  
 As we did rise, we die together.

When thou for sinne rebukest man,  
 Forthwith he waxeth wo and wan :  
 Bitternesse fills our bowels ; all our hearts  
 Pine, and decay,  
 And drop away,  
 And carrie with them th' other parts.<sup>1</sup>

But thou wilt sinne and grief destroy ;  
 That so the broken bones may joy,<sup>2</sup>  
 And tune together in a well-set song,  
 Full of his praises,  
 Who dead men raises.  
 Fractures well cur'd make us more strong.

## 20. Faith

**L**ORD, how couldst thou so much appease  
 Thy wrath for sinne, as when mans sight  
 was dimme,  
 And could see little, to regard his ease,  
 And bring by Faith all things to him ?

<sup>1</sup> Melt and consume  
 To smoke and fume,  
 Fretting to death our other parts.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. li. 8.

Hungrie I was, and had no meat :  
 I did conceit a most delicious feast ;  
 I had it straight, and did as truly eat,  
 As ever did a welcome guest.

There is a rare outlandish root,  
 Which when I could not get, I thought it here :  
 That apprehension cur'd so well my foot,  
 That I can walk to heav'n well neare.

I owed thousands and much more :  
 I did beleeve that I did nothing owe,  
 And liv'd accordingly ; my creditor  
 Beleeves so too, and lets me go.<sup>1</sup>

Faith makes me any thing, or all  
 That I beleeve is in the sacred storie :  
 And where sinne placeth<sup>2</sup> me in Adams fall,  
 Faith sets me higher in his glorie.

If I go lower in the book,  
 What can be lower then the common manger ?  
 Faith puts me there with him, who sweetly took  
 Our flesh and frailtie, death and danger.<sup>3</sup>

If blisse had lien in art or strength,  
 None but the wise or strong had gained it :  
 Where now by Faith all arms are of a length ;  
 One size doth all conditions fit.

<sup>1</sup> With no new score,  
 My creditour beleev'd so too.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Places.—W.

<sup>3</sup> My nature on him w<sup>th</sup> the danger.—W.

A peasant may beleeve as much  
 As a great Clerk, and reach the highest stature.  
 Thus dost thou make proud knowledge bend<sup>1</sup> and  
 crouch  
 While grace fills up uneven nature.

When creatures had no reall light  
 Inherent in them, thou didst make the sunne,  
 Impute a lustre, and allow them bright ;  
 And in this shew,<sup>2</sup> what Christ hath done.

That which before was darkned clean  
 With bushie groves, pricking the lookers eie,  
 Vanisht away, when Faith did change the  
 scene :  
 And then appear'd a glorious skie.

What though my bodie runne to dust ?  
 Faith cleaves unto it, counting evr'y grain  
 With an exact and most particular trust,  
 Reserving all for flesh again.

## 21. Prayer

**P**RAYER the Churches banquet, Angels age,  
 Gods breath in man returning to his birth,  
 The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrim-  
 age,  
 The Christian plummet sounding heav'n and  
 earth ;

<sup>1</sup> Bow.—W.

<sup>2</sup> This shadows out.—W.



Engine against th' Almightye, sinners towre,<sup>1</sup>  
 Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,  
 The six-daies-world transposing in an houre,<sup>2</sup>  
 A kinde of tune, which all things heare and  
 fear ;

Softnesse, and peace, and joy, and love, and  
 blisse,  
 Exalted Manna, gladnesse of the best,  
 Heaven in ordinarie, man well drest,  
 The milkie way, the bird of Paradise,

Church-bels beyond the starres heard, the souls  
 bloud,  
 The land of spices ; something understood.

## 22. The H. Communion

**N**OT in rich furniture, or fine aray,  
 Nor in a wedge of gold,  
 Thou, who from me wast sold,  
 To me dost now thy self convey ;  
 For so thou should'st without me still have been,  
 Leaving within me sinne :

But by the way of nourishment and strength  
 Thou creep'st into my breast ;  
 Making thy way my rest,  
 And thy small quantities my length ;

<sup>1</sup> Sinner's fort.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Transposer of y<sup>e</sup> world, wonder's resort.—W.

Which spread their forces into every part,  
 Meeting sinnes force and art.

Yet can these not get over to my soul,  
 Leaping the wall that parts  
 Our souls and fleshly hearts ;  
 But as th' outworks, they may controll  
 My rebel-flesh, and carrying thy name,  
 Affright both sinne and shame.

Onely thy grace, which with these elements  
 comes,  
 Knoweth the ready way,  
 And hath the privie key,  
 Op'ning the souls most subtile rooms ;  
 While those to spirits refin'd, at doore attend  
 Dispatches from their friend.

Give<sup>1</sup> me my captive soul, or take  
 My bodie also thither.  
 Another lift like this will make  
 Them both to be together.

Before that sinne turn'd flesh to stone,  
 And all our lump to leaven ;  
 A fervent sigh might well have blown  
 Our innocent earth to heaven.

<sup>1</sup> The previous part of this poem is wanting in W. The latter part, beginning here, is given, but is entitled "Prayer."

For sure when Adam did not know  
 To sinne, or sinne to smother ;  
 He might to heav'n from Paradise go,  
 As from one room t'another.

Thou<sup>1</sup> hast restor'd us to this ease  
 By this thy heav'nly bloud ;  
 Which I can go to, when I please,  
 And leave th' earth to their food.

### 23. Antiphon

*Cho.* **L**ET all the world in ev'ry corner sing,  
*My God and King.*

*Vers.* The heav'ns are not too high,  
 His praise may thither flie :  
 The earth is not too low,  
 His praises there may grow.

*Cho.* Let all the world in ev'ry corner sing,  
*My God and King.*

<sup>1</sup> For this stanza W. substitutes the following:—

But wee are strangers grown, O Lord,  
 Lett prayer help our losses :  
 Since thou hast taught vs by thy word  
 That wee may gaine by crosses.

*Vers.* The church with psalms must shout.  
 No doore can keep them out :  
 But above all, the heart  
 Must bear the longest part.

*Cho.* Let all the world in ev'ry corner sing,  
*My God and King.*

## 24. Love. I

**I**MMORTALL Love, authour of this great  
 frame,  
 Sprung from that<sup>1</sup> beautie which can never  
 fade ;  
 How hath man parcel'd out thy glorious  
 name,  
 And thrown it on<sup>2</sup> that dust which thou hast  
 made,

While mortall love doth<sup>3</sup> all the title gain !  
 Which siding with invention, they together  
 Bear all the sway, possessing heart and brain,  
 (Thy workmanship) and give thee share in  
 neither.

Wit fancies beautie, beautie raiseth wit :  
 The world is theirs ; they two play out the  
 game,

<sup>1</sup> The.—W.

<sup>2</sup> In.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Does.—W.

Thou standing by: and though thy glorious  
name  
Wrought our deliverance from th' infernall pit,

Who sings thy praise? onely a skarf or glove  
Doth warm our hands, and make them write  
of love.

## II

**I**MMORTALL Heat, O let thy greater  
flame  
Attract the lesser to it: let those fires,  
Which shall consume the world, first make it  
tame;

And kindle in our hearts such true desires,

As may consume our lusts, and make thee way.

Then shall our hearts pant thee; then shall  
our brain

All her invention on thine Altar lay,  
And there in hymnes send back thy fire again:

Our eies shall see thee, which before saw dust;  
Dust blown by wit, till that they both were  
blinde:

Thou shalt recover all thy goods in kinde,  
Who wert disseized by usurping lust:

All knees shall bow to thee; all wit shall  
rise,

And praise him who did make and mend our  
eies.

25. The Temper<sup>1</sup>

**H**OW should I praise thee, Lord! how  
 should my rymes  
 Gladly engrave thy love in steel,  
 If what my soul doth feel sometimes,  
 My soul might ever feel!

Although there were some fourtie<sup>1</sup> heav'ns, or  
 more,  
 Sometimes I peere above them all;  
 Sometimes I hardly reach a score,  
 Sometimes to hell I fall.

O rack me not to such a vast extent;  
 Those distances belong to thee:  
 The world's too little for thy tent,  
 A grave too big for me.

Wilt thou meet arms with man, that thou dost  
 stretch  
 A crumme of dust from heav'n to hell?  
 Will great God measure with a wretch?  
 Shall he thy stature spell?

O let me, when thy roof my soul hath hid,  
 O let me roost and nestle there:  
 Then of a sinner thou art rid,  
 And I of hope and fear.

<sup>1</sup> "The Christian Temper."—W.    <sup>2</sup> A hundred.—W.

Yet take thy way ; for sure thy way is best :  
 Stretch or contract me thy poore debter :  
 This is but tuning of my breast,  
 To make the musick better.

Whether I flie with angels, fall with dust,<sup>1</sup>  
 Thy hands made both, and I am there :  
 Thy power and love, my love and trust,  
 Make one place ev'ry where.

## 26. The Temper<sup>2</sup>

IT cannot be. Where is that mightie joy,  
 Which just now took up all my heart ?  
 Lord, if thou must needs use thy dart,  
 Save that, and me ; or sin for both destroy.

The grosser world stands to thy word and art ;  
 But thy diviner world of grace  
 Thou suddenly dost raise and race,<sup>3</sup>  
 And ev'ry day a new Creatour art.

O fix thy chair of grace, that all my powers  
 May also fix their reverence :  
 For when thou dost depart from hence,  
 They grow unruly, and sit in thy bowers.

<sup>1</sup> Whether I angell it or fall to dust.—W.

<sup>2</sup> “The Christian Temper.”—W.

<sup>3</sup> The spelling “race” (for “raze”) was probably adopted by Herbert for the sake of the rhyme. Cf. “raz'd, and raised” in “The Sacrifice,” l. 64.

Scatter, or binde them all to bend to thee :  
 Though elements change, and heaven move,  
 Let not thy higher Court remove,  
 But keep a standing Majestie in me.

## 27. Jordan

**W**HO sayes that fictions onely and false hair  
 Become a verse? Is there in truth no  
 beautie?

Is all good structure in a winding stair?  
 May no lines passe, except they do their dutie  
 Not to a true, but painted chair?

Is it no verse, except enchanted groves  
 And sudden arbours shadow course - spunne  
 lines?

Must purling streams refresh a lovers loves?  
 Must all be vail'd, while he that reades, divines,  
 Catching the sense at two removes?

Shepherds are honest people; let them sing:  
 Riddle who list, for me, and pull for Prime:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Pull for prime.* "Prime" is said to be the winning hand in "Primers," an old game with cards, in which apparently the cards were not dealt by the dealer, but pulled from the pack by the player. Donne has a similar phrase and allusion in "Satire," II. l. 86—

Peacemeale hee gets lands, and spends as much tyme  
 Wringing each acre, as maids pulling prime—  
 where there is a various reading, "as men pulling  
 for prime."



I envie no mans nightingale or spring ;  
 Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme,  
 Who plainly say, *My God, My King.*

## 28. Employment

**I**F as a flowre doth spread and die,  
 Thou wouldst extend me to some good,  
 Before I were by frosts extremitie  
 Nipt in the bud ;

The sweetnesse and the praise were thine ;  
 But the extension and the room,  
 Which in thy garland I should fill, were mine  
 At thy great doom.

For as thou dost impart thy grace,  
 The greater shall our glorie be.  
 The measure of our joyes is in this place,  
 The stuffe with thee.

Let me not languish then, and spend  
 A life as barren to thy praise,  
 As is the dust, to which that life doth tend,  
 But with delaies.

All things are busie ; onely I  
 Neither bring hony with the bees,  
 Nor flowres to make that, nor the husbandrie  
 To water these.

I am no link in thy great chain,  
 But all my companie is a weed.<sup>1</sup>  
 Lord place me in thy comfort ; give one strain  
 To my poore reed.<sup>2</sup>

## 29. The H. Scriptures. I

**O**H Book ! infinite sweetnesse ! let my heart  
 Suck ev'ry letter, and a hony gain,<sup>3</sup>  
 Precious for any grief in any part ;  
 To cleare the breast, to mollifie all pain.<sup>4</sup>

Thou art all health, health thriving, till it make  
 A full eternitie : thou art a masse  
 Of strange delights, where we may wish  
 and take.

Ladies, look here ; this is the thankfull glasse,

That mends the lookers eyes : this is the well  
 That washes what it shows. Who can  
 indeare

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "The Crosse" (No. 133), l. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Lord, that I may the sunns perfection gaine  
 Give mee his speed.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *A Priest to the Temple*, c. iv : "The chief  
 and top of his knowledge consists in the Book of  
 books, the storehouse and magazine of life and com-  
 fort, the holy Scriptures. There he sucks and  
 lives."

<sup>4</sup> Suple outward paine.—W.

Thy praise too much?<sup>1</sup> thou art heav'ns  
 Lidger<sup>2</sup> here,  
 Working against the states of death and hell.

Thou art joyes handsell: heav'n lies flat  
 in thee,  
 Subject to ev'ry mounters bended knee.

## II

OH that I knew how all thy lights combine,  
 And the configurations of their glorie!  
 Seeing not onely how each verse doth  
 shine,  
 But all the constellations of the storie.

This verse marks that, and both do make a  
 motion  
 Unto a third, that ten leaves off doth  
 lie:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Enough.—W.

<sup>2</sup> *Lidger*, i. e. “ambassador.” The word is quite distinct from *leaguer*, “a camp,” with which it is sometimes confused. Vaughan has the word in the form “leiger” in his poem “Corruption” in *Silex Scintillans*: “Angels lay leiger here.”

<sup>3</sup> “All truth being consonant to itself, and all being penned by one and the self-same Spirit, it cannot be, but that an industrious and judicious comparing of place with place must be a singular help for the right consideration of the Scriptures.”—*A Priest to the Temple*, c. iv.

Then as dispersed herbs do watch<sup>1</sup> a  
 potion,  
 These three make up some Christians destinie :

Such are thy secrets, which my life makes good,  
 And comments on thee :<sup>2</sup> for in ev'ry thing  
 Thy words do finde me out, and parallels  
 bring,  
 And in another make me understood.

Starres are poore books, and oftentimes do  
 misse :  
 This book of starres lights to<sup>3</sup> eternall  
 blisse.

### 30. Whitsunday

**L**ISTEN<sup>4</sup> sweet Dove unto my song,  
 And spread thy golden wings in me ;  
 Hatching my tender heart so long,  
 Till it get wing, and flie<sup>5</sup> away with thee.

Where is that fire which once descended  
 On thy Apostles ? thou didst then

<sup>1</sup> *Watch a potion.* The phrase has never been satisfactorily explained, and it is impossible not to suspect error, though both the MSS. and the *Editio princeps* have the word "watch" quite plainly.

<sup>2</sup> And more than fancy.—W.      <sup>3</sup> Can spell.—W.

<sup>4</sup> Come blessed Dove, charm'd w<sup>th</sup> my song,  
 Display thy golden wings in mee.—W.

<sup>5</sup> Till I get wing to fly.—W.

Keep open house, richly attended,  
Feasting all comers by twelve chosen men.<sup>1</sup>

Such glorious gifts thou didst bestow,  
That th' earth did like a heav'n appeare ;  
The starres were coming down to know  
If they might mend their wayes, and serve here.

The<sup>2</sup> sunne, which once did shine alone,  
Hung down his head, and wisht for night,  
When he beheld twelve sunnes for one  
Going about the world, and giving light.

But since those pipes of gold,<sup>3</sup> which brought  
That cordiall water to our ground,  
Were cut and martyr'd by the fault  
Of those, who did themselves through their side  
wound,

<sup>1</sup> With livery-graces furnishing thy men.—W.

<sup>2</sup> The last four stanzas are wanting in W., and in their place stand the following:—

But wee are falne from heaven to earth,  
And if wee can stay there, its well,  
He y<sup>t</sup> first fell from his great birth  
W<sup>th</sup>out thy help, leads us his way to hell.

Lord, once more shake y<sup>e</sup> heaven and earth,  
Least want of graces seem thy thrift ;  
For sinn would faine remove y<sup>e</sup> dearth,  
And lay it on thy husbandry for shift.

Show y<sup>t</sup> thy brests cannot be dry,  
But y<sup>t</sup> from them ioyes purle for ever,  
Melt into blessings all the sky,  
So wee may cease to suck, to praise thee, never.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Zech. iv. 12.

Thou shutt'st the doore, and keep'st within ;  
 Scarce a good joy creeps through the chink :  
 And if the braves<sup>1</sup> of conqu'ring sinne  
 Did not excite thee, we should wholly sink.

Lord, though we change, thou art the same ;  
 The same sweet God of love and light :  
 Restore this day, for thy great name,  
 Unto his ancient and miraculous right.

### 31. Grace

**M**Y stock lies dead, and no increase  
 Doth my dull husbandrie improve :  
 O let thy graces without cease  
 Drop from above !

If still the sunne<sup>2</sup> should hide his face,  
 Thy house would but<sup>3</sup> a dungeon prove,  
 Thy works nights captives : O let grace  
 Drop from above !

The dew doth ev'ry morning fall ;  
 And shall the dew out-strip thy dove ?  
 The dew, for which grasse cannot call,  
 Drop from above.

<sup>1</sup> *Braves*, i.e. bravadoes, or boasts. Cf. Fuller:  
 "Bitter was the *brave* which railing Rabsheca sent to  
 holy Hezekiah."—*Worthies*, l. 33.

<sup>2</sup> If the sunn still.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Thy great house would.—W.

Death<sup>1</sup> is still working like a mole,  
And digs my grave at each remove :  
Let grace work too, and on my soul  
Drop from above.

Sinne is still hammering my heart  
Unto a hardnesse, void of love :  
Let suppling grace, to crosse his art,  
Drop from above.

O come ! for thou dost know the way.  
Or if to me thou wilt not move,  
Remove me, where I need not say,  
*Drop from above.*

### 32. Praise

**T**O write a verse or two, is all the praise,  
That I can raise :  
Mend my estate in any wayes,  
Thou shalt have more.

I go to Church ; help me to wings, and I<sup>2</sup>  
Will thither flie ;  
Or, if I mount unto<sup>3</sup> the skie,  
I will do more.

<sup>1</sup> This stanza is wanting in W.

<sup>2</sup> Make me an angel, I.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Or if I steale up to.—W.

Man<sup>1</sup> is all weaknesse ; there is no such thing  
 As Prince or King :  
 His arm is short ; yet with a sling  
 He may do more.

An herb destill'd, and drunk, may dwell next  
 doore,  
 On the same floore,  
 To a brave soul : Exalt the poore,  
 They can do more.<sup>2</sup>

O<sup>3</sup> raise me then ! poore bees, that work all day,  
 Sting my delay,  
 Who have a work, as well as they,  
 And much, much more.

### 33. Affliction

**K**ILL me not ev'ry day,  
 Thou Lord of life ; since thy one death for me  
 Is more then all my deaths can be,  
 Though I in broken pay  
 Die over each houre of Methusalems stay.

<sup>1</sup> This stanza stands as fourth in W.

<sup>2</sup> For to a poore  
 It may doe more.—W.

<sup>3</sup> In W. this stanza is as follows :—

O raise me, then : for if a spider may  
 Spin all y<sup>e</sup> day :  
 Not flyes, but I, shall be his prey,  
 Who doe no more.



If all mens tears were let  
 Into one common sewer, sea, and brine ;  
 What were they all, compar'd to thine ?  
 Wherein if they were set,  
 They would discolour thy most bloody sweat.

Thou art my grief alone,  
 Thou Lord conceal it not : and as thou art  
 All my delight, so all my smart :  
 Thy crosse took up in one,  
 By way of imprest,<sup>1</sup> all my future mone.

### 34. Mattens

**I** CANNOT ope mine eyes,  
 But thou art ready there to catch  
 My morning-soul and sacrifice :  
 Then we must needs for that day make a match.

My God, what is a heart ?  
 Silver, or gold, or precious stone,  
 Or starre, or rainbow, or a part  
 Of all these things, or all of them in one ?

My God, what is a heart,  
 That thou shouldst it so eye, and wooe,  
 Powing upon it all thy art,  
 As if that thou hadst nothing els to do ?

<sup>1</sup> *Imprest*, i. e. earnest-money.

Indeed mans whole estate  
 Amounts (and richly) to serve thee :  
 He did not heav'n and earth create,  
 Yet studies them, not him by whom they be.

Teach me thy love to know ;  
 That this new light, which now I  
 see,  
 May both the work and workman show :  
 Then by a sunne-beam I will climbe to thee.

### 35. Sinne

O THAT I could a sinne once see !  
 We paint the devil foul, yet he  
 Hath some good in him, all agree.  
 Sinne is flat opposite to th' Almighty, seeing  
 It wants the good of *vertue*, and of *being*.

But God more care of us hath had :  
 If apparitions make us sad,  
 By sight of sinne we should grow  
 mad.  
 Yet as in sleep we see foul death, and live :  
 So devils are our sinnes in perspective.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Many editions since 1674 have the misprint  
 "prospective."

36. Even-song <sup>1</sup>

BLEST be the God of love,  
 Who gave me eyes, and light, and power this day,  
 Both to be busie, and to play.  
 But much more blest be God above,

Who gave me sight alone,  
 Which to himself he did denie :  
 For when he sees my waies, I dy :  
 But I have got his sonne, and he hath none.

What have I brought thee home  
 For this thy love? have I discharg'd the debt,  
 Which this dayes favour did beget?  
 I ranne; but all I brought, was fome.

Thy diet, care, and cost  
 Do end in bubbles, balls of winde;  
 Of winde to thee whom I have crost,  
 But balls of wilde-fire to my troubled minde.

Yet still thou goest on,  
 And now with darknesse closest wearie eyes,  
 Saying to man, *It doth suffice* :  
*Henceforth repose; your work is done.*

<sup>1</sup> This poem is not in W., but in its place is a different poem on the same subject. See below, p. 252, where it is given.

Thus in thy Ebony box  
 Thou dost inclose us, till the day  
 Put our amendment in our way,  
 And give new wheels to our disorder'd clocks.

I muse, which shows more love,  
 The day or night: that is the gale, this th' harbour;  
 That is the walk, and this the arbour;  
 Or that the garden, this the grove.

My God, thou art all love.  
 Not one poore minute 'scapes thy breast,  
 But brings a favour from above;  
 And in this love, more then in bed, I rest.

### 37. Church-monuments

**W**HILE that my soul repairs to her devotion,  
 Here I intombe my flesh, that it betimes  
 May take acquaintance of this heap of dust;  
 To which the blast of deaths incessant motion,  
 Fed with the exhalation of our crimes,  
 Drives all at last. Therefore I gladly trust

My bodie to this school, that it may learn  
 To spell his elements, and finde his birth  
 Written in dustie heraldrie and lines;  
 Which dissolution sure doth best discern,  
 Comparing dust with dust, and earth with earth.  
 These laugh at Ieat, and Marble put for signes,

To sever the good fellowship of dust,  
 And spoil the meeting. What shall point out  
 them,  
 When they shall bow, and kneel, and fall down  
 flat  
 To kisse those heaps, which now they have in trust?  
 Deare flesh, while I do pray, learne here thy  
 stemme  
 And true descent ; that when thou shalt grow fat,

And wanton in thy cravings, thou mayst know,  
 That flesh is but the glasse, which holds the dust  
 That measures all our time ; which also shall  
 Be crumbled<sup>1</sup> into dust. Mark here below  
 How tame these ashes are, how free from lust,  
 That thou mayst fit thyself against thy fall.

### 38. Church-musick

SWEETEST of sweets, I thank you : when  
 displeasure  
 Did through my bodie wound my minde,  
 You took me thence, and in your house of pleasure  
 A daintie lodging me assign'd.

Now I in you without a bodie move,  
 Rising and falling with your wings :

<sup>1</sup> Broken.—W.

We both together sweetly live and love,  
 Yet say sometimes, *God help poore  
 Kings.*<sup>1</sup>

Comfort, 'Ile die ; for if you poste<sup>2</sup> from me,  
 Sure I shall do so, and much more :  
 But if I travell in your companie,  
 You know the way to heavens doore.

### 39. Church-lock and key<sup>3</sup>

I KNOW it is my sinne, which locks<sup>4</sup> thine  
 eares,

And bindes thy hands ;  
 Out-crying my requests, drowning my tears ;  
 Or else the chilnesse of my faint demands.<sup>5</sup>

But<sup>6</sup> as cold hands are angrie with the fire,  
 And mend<sup>7</sup> it still ;

<sup>1</sup> A new stanza is inserted between this and the next in W.—

O what a state is this w<sup>ch</sup> never knew  
 Sicknes, or shame, or sinn, or sorrow :  
 Where all my debts are payd, none can accrue,  
 W<sup>ch</sup> knoweth not what means too morrow.

<sup>2</sup> Part.—W.

<sup>3</sup> The title of this in W. is "Prayer."

<sup>4</sup> Stops.—W.

<sup>5</sup> Between this stanza and the next W. inserts the following :—

If either Innocence or fervencie  
 Did play their part,  
 Armies of blessings would contend and vye,  
 W<sup>ch</sup> of them soonest should attaine my hart.

<sup>6</sup> Yet.—W.

<sup>7</sup> Mending.—W.

So I do lay the want of my desire,  
Not on my sinnes, or coldnesse, but thy will.

Yet<sup>1</sup> heare, O God, onely for his blouds sake  
Which pleads for me :  
For though sinnes plead too, yet like stones they  
make  
His blouds sweet current much more loud to be.

#### 40. The Church-floore

MARK you the floore? that square and  
speckled stone,  
Which looks so firm and strong,  
Is *Patience* :

And th' other black and grave, wherewith each  
one  
Is checker'd all along,  
Is *Humilitie* :

The gentle rising, which on either hand  
Leads to the Quire above,  
Is *Confidence* :

But the sweet cement, which in one sure band  
Ties the whole frame, is *Love*  
And *Charitie*.

<sup>1</sup> Instead of this stanza W. has—

O make mee wholly guiltles, or at least  
Guiltles so farr,  
That zele and purenes circling my request  
May guard it safe beyond y<sup>e</sup> highest starr.

Hither sometimes Sinne steals, and stains  
 The marbles neat and curious veins :  
 But all is cleansed when the marble weeps.  
 Sometimes Death, puffing at the doore,  
 Blows all the dust about the floore ;  
 But while he thinks to spoil the room, he sweeps.  
 Blest be the *Architect*, whose art  
 Could build so strong in a weak heart.

#### 41. The Windows

**L**ORD, how can man preach thy eternall  
 word ?

He is a brittle crazie glasse :  
 Yet in thy temple thou dost him afford  
 This glorious and transcendent place,  
 To be a window, through thy grace.

But when thou dost anneal<sup>1</sup> in glasse thy storie,  
 Making thy life to shine within  
 The holy Preachers ; then the light and glorie  
 More rev'rend grows, and more doth  
 win ;  
 Which else shows watrish, bleak, and  
 thin.

Doctrine and life, colours and light, in one  
 When they combine and mingle, bring  
 A strong regard and aw : but speech alone  
 Doth vanish like a flaring thing,  
 And in the eare, not conscience ring.

<sup>1</sup> *Anneal*: a technical term for heating the glass so as to fix the colours.



## 42. Trinitie Sunday

LORD, who hast form'd me out of mud,<sup>1</sup>  
 And hast redeem'd me through thy bloud,  
 And sanctifi'd me to do good ;

Purge all my sinnes done heretofore :  
 For I confesse my heavie score,  
 And I will strive to sinne no more.

Enrich my heart, mouth, hands in me,  
 With faith, with hope, with charitie,  
 That I may runne, rise, rest with thee.

## 43. Content

PEACE mutt'ring thoughts, and do not  
 grudge to keep

Within the walls of your own breast :  
 Who cannot on his own bed sweetly sleep,  
 Can on anothers hardly rest.

Gad not abroad at ev'ry quest and call  
 Of an untrained hope or <sup>2</sup> passion.  
 To court each place or fortune that doth <sup>3</sup> fall,  
 Is wantonnesse in contemplation.

Mark how the fire in flints <sup>4</sup> doth quiet lie,  
 Content and warm t' it self alone :  
 But when it would appeare to others eye,  
 Without a knock it never shone.

<sup>1</sup> Rais'd me from the mudd.—W.

<sup>2</sup> And.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Does.—W.

<sup>4</sup> Flint.—W.

Give me the pliant minde, whose gentle measure  
 Complies and suits with all estates ;  
 Which can let loose to a crown, and yet with  
 pleasure

Take up within a cloisters gates.<sup>1</sup>

This soul doth span the world, and hang content  
 From either pole unto the centre :  
 Where in each room of the well-furnisht tent  
 He lies warm, and without adventure.

The brags of life are but a nine dayes wonder ;  
 And after death the fumes that spring  
 From private bodies, make as big a thunder,  
 As those which rise from a huge King.

Onely thy Chronicle is lost ; and yet  
 Better by worms be all once spent,  
 Then to have hellish moths still gnaw and fret  
 Thy name in books, which may not  
 rent :

When all thy deeds, whose brunt thou feel'st alone,  
 Are chaw'd by others pens<sup>2</sup> and  
 tongue ;

And as their wit is, their digestion,  
 Thy nourisht fame is weak or strong.

Thence cease discoursing soul, till thine own ground,  
 Do not thy self or friends importune.  
 He that by seeking hath himself once found,  
 Hath euer found a happie fortune.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the reference to Charles v. as given in Walton's Life of Herbert, above, p. xcviij.

<sup>2</sup> Pen.—W.

44. The Quidditie<sup>1</sup>

MY God, a verse is not a crown,  
 No point of honour, or gay suit,  
 No<sup>2</sup> hawk, or<sup>2</sup> banquet, or<sup>2</sup> renown,  
 Nor a good sword, nor yet a lute :

It cannot vault, or dance, or play ;  
 It never was in *France* or *Spain* ;  
 Nor can it entertain the day  
 With a<sup>3</sup> great stable or demain :

It is no office, art, or news,  
 Nor the Exchange, or busie Hall ;  
 But it is that which while I use  
 I am with thee, and *Most take all*.

## 45. Humilitie

I SAW the Vertues sitting hand in hand  
 In sev'rall ranks upon an azure throne,  
 Where all the beasts and fowls by their command  
 Presented tokens of submission.

<sup>1</sup> The word is apparently used here not in its proper sense of "the essence of a thing," but rather as meaning "a trifle" or "conceit." In W. the title is "Poetry."

<sup>2</sup> W. has "nor" three times over in this line.

<sup>3</sup> My.—W.



## 46. Frailtie

LORD, in my silence how do I despise  
   What upon trust  
 Is styled *honour, riches, or fair eyes* ;  
   But is *fair dust* !  
       I surname them *gilded clay,*  
       *Deare*<sup>1</sup> *earth, fine grasse or hay* ;  
 In all, I think my foot doth ever tread  
   Upon their head.

But when I view abroad both Regiments ;  
   The worlds, and thine :  
 Thine clad with simplenesse, and sad events ;  
   The other fine,  
       Full of glorie and gay weeds,<sup>2</sup>  
       Brave language, braver deeds :  
 That which was dust before, doth quickly rise,  
   And prick mine eyes.

O brook not this, lest if what even now<sup>3</sup>  
   My foot did tread,  
 Affront those joyes, wherewith thou didst  
       endow,  
   And long since wed

<sup>1</sup> In W. the last three lines are as follows:—

  Misuse them all the day,  
 And ever as I walk, my foot doth tredd  
   Vpon their head.

<sup>2</sup> *Weeds, i.e.* “garments,” as in “The Sacrifice” (No. 4), l. 178.

<sup>3</sup> Least if y<sup>t</sup> w<sup>ch</sup> iust now.—W.

My poore soul, ev'n sick of love :  
 It may a Babel prove  
 Commodious to conquer heav'n and thee  
 Planted in me.

47. Constancie<sup>1</sup>

WHO is the honest man?  
 He that doth still and strongly good pursue,  
 To God, his neighbour, and himself most true :  
 Whom neither force nor fawning can  
 Unpinne, or wrench from giving all their due.

Whose honestie is not  
 So loose or easie, that a ruffling winde  
 Can blow away, or glittering look it blinde :  
 Who rides his sure and even trot,  
 While the world now rides by, now lags behinde.

<sup>1</sup> The original of this is said to have been Herbert's stepfather, Sir John Danvers. See *The Standard of Equality*, which was dedicated to him in 1647 by Philo-Decæus: "Lighting casually on the poems of Mr. George Herbert, lately deceased (whose pious life and death have converted me to a full belief that there is a St. George), and therein pursuing the description of a 'constant man,' it directed my thoughts unto yourself; having heard that the author in his lifetime had therein designed no other title than your character in that description" (quoted in Dr. Grosart's edition of *Herbert's Poems*).

Who, when great trials come,  
 Nor seeks, nor shunnes them; but doth calmly  
 stay,  
 Till he the thing and the example weigh:  
 All being brought into a summe,  
 What place or person calls for, he doth pay.

Whom none can work or woove  
 To use in any thing a trick or sleight,  
 For above all things he abhorres deceit:  
 His words and works and fashion too  
 All of a piece, and all are cleare and straight.

Who never melts or thaws  
 At close tentations: when the day is done,  
 His goodnesse sets not, but in dark can runne:  
 The sunne to others writeth laws,  
 And is their vertue; Vertue is his Sunne.

Who, when he is to treat  
 With sick folks, women, those whom passions  
 sway,  
 Allows for that, and keeps his constant way:  
 Whom others faults do not defeat;  
 But though men fail him, yet his part doth play.

Whom nothing can procure,  
 When the wide world runnes bias,<sup>1</sup> from his will  
 To writhe his limbes, and share, not mend the ill.  
 This is the Mark-man, safe and sure,  
 Who still is right, and prayes to be so still.

<sup>1</sup> *Bias* is here an adverb = "obliquely" or "athwart." So in Rowlands' *Let. Humours Blood*, i. 47: "His tongue runs byas on affairs."

## 48. Affliction

**M**Y heart did heave, and there came forth,  
*O God!*

By that I knew that thou wast in the grief,  
 To guide and govern it to my relief,

Making a scepter of the rod:

Hadst thou not had thy part,  
 Sure the unruly sigh had broke my heart.

But since thy breath gave me both life and shape,  
 Thou knowst my tallies; and when there's  
 assign'd

So much breath to a sigh, what's then behinde?

Or if some yeares with it escape,

The sigh then onely is

A gale to bring me sooner to my blisse.

Thy life on earth was grief, and thou art still  
 Constant unto it, making it to be

A point of honour, now to grieve in me,

And in thy members suffer ill.

They who lament one crosse,  
 Thou dying dayly, praise thee to thy losse.

## 49. The Starre

**B**RIGHT spark, shot from a brighter place,  
 Where beams surround my Saviours face,

Canst thou be any where

So well as there?



Yet, if thou wilt from thence depart,  
Take a bad lodging in my heart ;  
For thou canst make a debter,  
And make it better.

First with thy fire-work burn to dust  
Folly, and worse then folly, lust :  
Then with thy light refine,  
And make it shine :

So disengag'd from sinne and sicknesse,  
Touch it with thy celestiall quicknesse,  
That it may hang and move  
After thy love.

Then with our trinitie of light,  
Motion, and heat, let's take our flight  
Unto the place where thou  
Before didst bow.

Get me a standing there, and place  
Among the beams, which crown the face  
Of him, who dy'd to part  
Sinne and my heart :

That so among the rest I may  
Glitter, and curle, and winde as they :  
That winding is their fashion  
Of adoration.

Sure thou wilt joy, by gaining me  
To flie home like a laden bee  
Unto that hive of beams  
And garland-streams.

## 50. Sunday

O<sup>1</sup> DAY most calm, most bright,  
 The fruit of this, the next worlds bud,  
 Th' indorsement of supreme delight,  
 Writ by a friend, and with his blood;  
 The couch of time; cares balm and bay:  
 The week were dark, but for thy light:  
     Thy torch doth show the way.

The other dayes and thou  
 Make up one man; whose face thou art,  
 Knocking at heaven with thy brow:  
 The worky-daies are the back-part;  
 The burden of the week lies there,  
 Making the whole to stoup and bow,  
     Till thy release appeare.

Man had straight forward gone  
 To endlesse death: but thou dost pull  
 And turn us round to look on one,  
 Whom, if we were not very dull,  
 We could not choose but look on still;  
 Since there is no place so alone,  
     The which he doth not fill.

<sup>1</sup> In W. the first stanza is as follows:—

O day so calme, so bright:  
 The couch of tyme, y<sup>e</sup> balme of teares,  
 Th' indorsement of supreme delight,  
 The parter of my wrangling feares,  
 Setting in order what they tumble:  
 The week were dark, but y<sup>t</sup> thy light  
     Teaches it not to stumble.

Sundaies<sup>1</sup> the pillars are,  
 On which heav'ns palace arched lies :  
 The other dayes fill up the spare  
 And hollow room with vanities.  
 They are the fruitfull beds and borders  
 In Gods rich garden : that is bare,  
 Which parts their ranks and orders.

The Sundaies of mans life,  
 Thredded together on times string,  
 Make bracelets to adorn the wife  
 Of the eternall glorious King.<sup>2</sup>  
 On Sunday heavens gate stands ope ;  
 Blessings are plentiful and rife,  
 More plentiful then hope.<sup>3</sup>

This day my Saviour rose,  
 And did inclose this light for his :  
 That, as each beast his manger knows,  
 Man might not of his fodde misse.  
 Christ hath took in this piece of ground,  
 And made a garden there for those  
 Who want herbs for their wound.

<sup>1</sup> In W. this stanza is as follows :—

Sundaies the pillars are  
 On which heaven's kingdome arch'd doth stand :  
 The other days fill up the spare  
 And hollow room on either hand :  
 They are ye rowes of fruitful trees  
 Parted w<sup>th</sup> alleys or w<sup>th</sup> grass  
 In God's rich Paradise.

<sup>2</sup> Make bracelets for ye spouse and wife  
 Of the Imortall onely King.—W.

<sup>3</sup> See Walton's Life (above, p. ciii) for Herbert's use of this stanza on the last Sunday of his life.

The rest of our Creation  
 Our great Redeemer did remove  
 With the same shake, which at his passion  
 Did th' earth and all things with it move.  
 As Samson bore the doores away,<sup>1</sup>  
 Christs hands, though nail'd, wrought our  
 salvation,  
 And did unhinge that day.

The brightnesse of that day  
 We sullied by our foul offence:  
 Wherefore that robe we cast away,  
 Having a new at his expence,  
 Whose drops of bloud paid the full price,  
 That was requir'd to make us gay,  
 And fit for Paradise.

Thou art a day of mirth:  
 And where the week-dayes trail on ground,  
 Thy flight is higher, as thy birth.  
 O let me take thee at the bound,  
 Leaping with thee from sev'n to sev'n,  
 Till that we both, being toss'd from earth,  
 Flie hand in hand to heav'n!

## 51. Avarice

**M**ONEY, thou bane of blisse, and sourse of wo,  
 Whence com'st thou, that thou art so  
 fresh and fine?

I know thy parentage is base and low:  
 Man found thee poore and dirtie in a mine.

<sup>1</sup> Judg. xvi. 3.

Surely thou didst so little contribute  
 To this great kingdome, which thou now hast  
 got,  
 That he was fain, when thou wert destitute,  
 To digge thee out of thy dark cave and grot :

Then forcing thee, by fire he made thee bright :  
 Nay, thou hast got the face of man ; for we  
 Have with our stamp and seal transferr'd our  
 right :  
 Thou art the man, and man but drosse to thee.

Man calleth thee his wealth, who made thee  
 rich ;  
 And while he digs out thee, falls in the ditch.

52. Ana- { MARY }  
 { ARMY } gram

HOW well her name an *Army* doth present,  
 In whom the *Lord of hosts* did pitch his tent !

53. To all Angels and Saints

OH glorious spirits, who after all your bands  
 See the smooth face of God, without a frown  
 Or strict commands ;  
 Where ev'ry one is king, and hath his crown  
 If not upon his head, yet in his hands : <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rev. iv. 10.









O that thou shouldst give dust a tongue  
 To crie to thee,  
 And then not heare it crying! all day long  
 My heart was in my knee,  
 But no hearing.

Therefore my soul lay out of sight,  
 Untun'd, unstrung:  
 My feeble spirit, unable to look right,  
 Like a nipt blossome, hung  
 Discontented.

O cheer and tune my heartlesse breast,  
 Deferre no time;  
 That so thy favours granting my request,  
 They and my minde<sup>1</sup> may chime,  
 And mend<sup>2</sup> my ryme.<sup>3</sup>

## 56. Christmas

ALL after pleasures as I rid one day,<sup>4</sup>  
 My horse and I; both tir'd, bodie and  
 minde,  
 With full crie of affections, quite astray;  
 I took up in the next inne I could finde.

There when I came, whom found I but my  
 deare,  
 My dearest Lord, expecting till the grief

<sup>1</sup> Soule.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Meet.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. MacDonald's *England's Antiphon*, p. 184.

<sup>4</sup> Riding on a day.—W.

Of pleasures brought me to him, readie there  
To be all passengers most sweet relief?

O Thou, whose glorious, yet contracted light,  
Wrapt in nights mantle, stole into a manger;  
Since my dark soul and brutish is thy right,  
To Man of all beasts be not thou a stranger:

Furnish and deck my soul, that thou mayst have  
A better lodging, then a rack, or grave.<sup>1</sup>

THE<sup>2</sup> shepherds sing: and shall I silent be?  
My God, no hymne for thee?

My soul's a shepherd too; a flock it feeds  
Of thoughts, and words, and deeds;

The pasture is thy word: the streams, thy grace  
Enriching all the place.

Shepherd and flock shall sing, and all my powers  
Out-sing the day-light houres.

Then we will chide the sunne for letting night  
Take up his place and right:

We sing one common Lord; wherefore he  
should

Himself the candle hold.

I will go searching, till I finde a sunne  
Shall stay, till we have done;

A willing shiner, that shall shine as gladly,  
As frost-nipt sunnes look sadly.

<sup>1</sup> Furnish my soule to thee, y<sup>t</sup> being drest,  
Of better lodging thou maist be possest.—W.

<sup>2</sup> This latter part of the poem is wanting in W.

Then we will sing, and shine all our own day,  
 And one another pay :  
 His beams shall cheer my breast, and both so  
 twine,  
 Till ev'n his beams sing, and my musick shine.

## 57. Ungratefulnesse

LORD, with what bountie and rare  
 clemencie  
 Hast thou redeem'd us from the grave !  
 If thou hadst let us runne,  
 Gladly had man ador'd the sunne,  
 And thought his god most brave ;  
 Where now we shall be better gods then he.

Thou hast but two rare cabinets full of treasure,<sup>1</sup>  
 The *Tritie* and *Incarnation* :  
 Thou hast unlockt them both,<sup>2</sup>  
 And made them jewels to betroth  
 The work of thy creation  
 Unto thy self in everlasting pleasure.

The statelier cabinet is the *Tritie*,  
 Whose sparkling light accesse denies :  
 Therefore thou dost not show  
 This fully to us,<sup>3</sup> till death blow  
 The dust into our eyes :  
 For by that<sup>4</sup> powder thou wilt make us see.

<sup>1</sup> Thou hadst but two rich cabinets of treasure.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Laid open both.—W.    <sup>3</sup> This to us fully.—W.

<sup>4</sup> This.—W.

But all thy sweets are packt up in the other ;  
 Thy mercies thither flock and flow :  
 That as the first affrights,  
 This may allure us with delights ;  
 Because this box <sup>1</sup> we know ;  
 For we have all of us just such another.

But man is close, reserv'd, and dark to thee :  
 When thou demandest but a heart,  
 He cavils instantly.  
 In his poore cabinet of bone  
 Sinnes have their box apart,  
 Defrauding thee, who gavest two for one.

## 58. Sighs and Grones

O DO not use me  
 After my sinnes ! look not on my desert,  
 But on thy glorie ! then thou wilt reform  
 And not refuse me : for thou onely art  
 The mightie God, but I a sillie worm ;  
 O do not bruise me !  
 O do not urge me !  
 For what account can thy ill steward make ?  
 I have abus'd thy stock, destroy'd thy woods,  
 Suckt all thy magazens : my head did ake,  
 Till it found out how to consume thy goods :  
 O do not scourge me !

<sup>1</sup> Bone.—B. Ct. l. 28.

O do not blinde me !

I have deserv'd that an Egyptian night  
Should thicken all my powers ; because my lust  
Hath still sow'd fig-leaves to exclude thy light :  
But I am frailtie, and already dust ;

O do not grinde me !

O do not fill me

With the turn'd viall of thy bitter wrath !  
For thou hast other vessels full of bloud,  
A part whereof my Saviour empti'd hath,  
Ev'n unto death : since he di'd for my good,

O do not kill me !

But O reprieve me !

For thou hast *life* and *death* at thy command ;  
Thou art both *Judge* and *Saviour*, *feast* and *rod*,  
*Cordiall* and *Corrosive* : put not thy hand  
Into the bitter box ; but O my God,

My God, relieve me !

## 59. The World

LOVE built a stately house ; where *Fortune*  
came,  
And spinning phansies, she was heard to say,  
That her fine cobwebs did support the frame,  
Whereas they were supported by the same :  
But *Wisdome* quickly swept them all away.

Then *Pleasure* came, who liking not the fashion,  
Began to make *Balcones*, *Terraces*,

Till she had weakned all by alteration :  
 But rev'rend *laws*, and many a *proclamation*  
 Reformed all at length<sup>1</sup> with menaces.

Then enter'd *Sinne*, and with that Sycomore,  
 Whose leaves first sheltred man from drought  
 and dew,<sup>2</sup>

Working and winding slyly evermore,  
 The inward walls and Sommers<sup>3</sup> cleft and tore :  
 But *Grace* shor'd these, and cut that as it grew.

Then *Sinne* combin'd with *Death* in a firm band  
 To rase the building to the very floore :  
 Which they effected, none could them withstand.  
 But *Love* and *Grace* took *Glorie* by the hand,<sup>4</sup>  
 And built a braver Palace then before.

### 60. Coloss. 3. 3

*Our life is hid with Christ in God.*

**M**Y words and thoughts do both expresse  
 this notion,  
 That *Life* hath with the sun a double motion.  
 The first *Is* straight, and our diurnall friend,  
 The other *Hid*, and doth obliquely bend.

<sup>1</sup> Quickly reformed all.—W.    <sup>2</sup> Cf. Gen. iii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Sommers*, i.e. the central beam of a floor supporting the joists.

<sup>4</sup> But Love took Grace and Glorie by the hand.—  
 W.

Our life is wrapt *In* flesh, and tends to earth.  
 The other winds towards *Him*, whose happie  
 birth  
 Taught me to live here so, *That* still one eye  
 Should aim and shoot at that which *Is* on high :  
 Quitting with daily labour all *My* pleasure,  
 To gain at harvest an eternall *Treasure*.

## 61. Vanitie

**T**HE fleet Astronomer can bore,  
 And thred the spheres with his quick-piercing  
 minde :  
 He views their stations, walks from doore to  
 doore,  
     Surveys, as if he had design'd  
 To make a purchase there : he sees their dances,  
     And knoweth long before,  
 Both their full-ey'd aspects, and secret glances.

The nimble Diver with his side  
 Cuts through the working waves, that he may  
 fetch  
 His dearely-earned pearl, which God did hide  
     On purpose from the ventrous wretch ;  
 That he might save his life, and also hers,  
     Who with excessive pride  
 Her own destruction and his danger wears.

The subtil Chymick can devest  
 And strip the creature naked, till he finde  
 The callow principles within their nest :

There he imparts to them his minde,  
 Admitted to their bed-chamber, before  
     They appeare trim and drest  
 To ordinarie suitours at the doore.

What hath not man sought out and  
     found,  
 But his deare God? who yet his glorious law  
 Embosomes in us, mellowing the ground  
     With showres and frosts, with love and  
     aw,  
 So that we need not say, Where's this command?  
     Poore man, thou searchest round  
 To finde out *death*, but missest *life* at hand.

## 62. Lent

**W**ELCOME deare feast of Lent: who  
     loves not thee,  
 He loves not Temperance, or Authoritie,  
     But is compos'd of passion.<sup>1</sup>  
 The Scriptures bid us *fast*; the Church sayes,  
     *now*:  
 Give to thy Mother, what thou wouldst allow  
     To ev'ry Corporation.

The humble soul compos'd of love and fear  
 Begins at home, and layes the burden there,  
     When doctrines disagree.  
 He sayes, in things which use hath justly got,  
 I am a scandall to the Church, and not  
     The Church is so to me.

<sup>1</sup> A child of passion.—W



True Christians should be glad of an occasion  
 To use their temperance, seeking no evasion,  
     When good is seasonable ;  
 Unlesse Authoritie, which should increase  
 The obligation in us, make it lesse,  
     And Power it self disable.

Besides the cleanness of sweet abstinence,  
 Quick thoughts and motions at a small expense,  
     A face not fearing light :  
 Whereas in fulnesse there are sluttish fumes,  
 Sowre exhalations, and dishonest rheumes,  
     Revenging the delight.

Then those same pendant profits, which the spring  
 And Easter intimate, enlarge the thing,  
     And goodnesse of the deed.

Neither ought other mens abuse of Lent  
 Spoil the <sup>1</sup> good use ; lest by that argument  
     We forfeit all our Creed.

It's true, we cannot reach Christs forti'th day ;  
 Yet to go part of that religious way,  
     Is better then to rest :  
 We cannot reach our Saviours puritie ;  
 Yet are we bid, *Be holy ev'ni as he.*  
     In both let's do our best.

Who goeth in the way which <sup>2</sup> Christ hath gone,  
 Is much more sure to meet with him, then one  
     That travelleth by-ways :

<sup>1</sup> Our.—W.

<sup>2</sup> That way which.—B. ; the way that.—W.

Perhaps my God, though he be farre before,  
 May turn, and take me by the hand, and more  
     May strengthen my decayes.

Yet Lord instruct us to improve our fast,  
 By starving sinne and taking such repast,  
     As may our faults<sup>1</sup> controll:  
 That ev'ry man may revell at his doore,  
 Not in his parlour; banquetting the poore,<sup>2</sup>  
     And among those his soul.

### 63. Vertue

SWEET day, so cool, so calm, so bright,  
 The bridall of the earth and skie:  
 The dew shall weep thy fall to night;  
     For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angrie and brave  
 Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:  
 Thy root is ever in its<sup>3</sup> grave,  
     And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet dayes and roses,  
 A box where sweets compacted lie;  
 My musick shows ye have your closes,  
     And all must die.

Onely a sweet and vertuous soul,  
 Like season'd timber, never gives;  
 But though the whole world turn to coal,  
     Then chiefly lives.

<sup>1</sup> All vice.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Isa. lviii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> His.—W.

## 64. The Pearl

*Matth. 13.*

I KNOW the wayes of learning ; both the head  
And pipes that feed the presse, and make  
it runne ;

What reason hath from nature borrowed,<sup>1</sup>  
Or of it self, like a good huswife, spunne  
In laws and policie ; what the starres conspire,  
What willing nature speaks, what forc'd by fire ;  
Both th' old discoveries, and the new-found seas,  
The stock and surplus, cause and historie :  
All these stand open, or I have the keyes :  
Yet I love thee.

I know the wayes of honour, what maintains  
The quick returns of courtesie and wit :  
In vies of favours whether partie gains,  
When glorie swells the heart, and moldeth it  
To all expressions both of hand and eye,  
Which on the world a true-love-knot may tie,  
And bear the bundle, wheresoe're it goes :  
How many drammes of spirit there must be  
To sell my life unto my friends or foes :  
Yet I love thee.

I know the wayes of pleasure, the sweet strains,  
The lullings and the relishes of it ;  
The propositions of hot bloud and brains ;  
What mirth and musick mean ; what love and wit

<sup>1</sup> Purchased.—W

Have done these twentie<sup>1</sup> hundred yeares, and  
more :

I<sup>2</sup> know the projects of unbridled store :  
My stuffe is flesh, not brasse ; my senses live,  
And grumble oft, that they have more in me  
Then he that curbs them, being but one to five :  
Yet I love thee.

I know all these, and have them in my hand :  
Therefore not sealed,<sup>3</sup> but with open eyes  
I flie to thee, and fully understand  
Both the main sale, and the commodities ;  
And at what rate and price I have thy love ;  
With all the circumstances that may move :  
Yet through the<sup>4</sup> labyrinths, not my groveling  
wit,  
But thy silk twist let down from heav'n to me,  
Did both conduct and teach me, how by it  
To climbe to thee.

<sup>1</sup> Many.—W.

<sup>2</sup> In W. the remaining lines of this stanza are as given below ; but Herbert has erased the first three of them as if dissatisfied with them, without, however, substituting anything in their place :

Where both their baskets are w<sup>th</sup> all their store,  
The smacks of dainties and their exaltation :  
What both y<sup>e</sup> stops and pegs of pleasure bee,  
The ioyes of company or contemplation.  
Yet I love thee.

<sup>3</sup> W. has *seeled* (for “sealed”), which is a technical term in hawking for closing the eyes by sewing the eyelids together.

<sup>4</sup> These.—W.

65. Affliction<sup>1</sup>

**B**ROKEN in pieces all asunder,  
 Lord, hunt me not,  
 A thing forgot,  
 Once a poore creature, now a wonder,<sup>2</sup>  
 A wonder tortur'd in the space  
 Betwixt this world and that of grace.

My thoughts are all a case of knives,  
 Wounding my heart  
 With scatter'd smart,  
 As watering pots give flowers their lives.  
 Nothing their furie can controll,  
 While they do wound and prick<sup>3</sup> my soul.

All my attendants are at strife,  
 Quitting their place  
 Unto my face :  
 Nothing performs the task of life :  
 The elements are let loose to fight,  
 And while I live, trie out their right.

Oh help, my God ! let not their plot  
 Kill them and me,  
 And also thee,  
 Who art my life : dissolve the knot,  
 As the sunne scatters by his light  
 All the rebellions of the night.

<sup>1</sup> Tentation.—W<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ps. lxxi. 7.<sup>3</sup> Pink.—MSS

Then shall those powers, which work for grief,  
 Enter thy pay,  
 And day by day  
 Labour thy praise, and my relief;  
 With care and courage building me,  
 Till I reach heav'n, and much more thee.

## 66. Man

MY God, I heard this day,  
 That none doth build<sup>1</sup> a stately habitation,  
 But he that means to dwell therein.  
 What house more stately hath there been,  
 Or can be, then is Man? to whose creation  
 All things are in decay.

For Man is ev'ry thing,  
 And more: He is a tree, yet bears no fruit;<sup>2</sup>  
 A beast, yet is, or should be more:  
 Reason and speech we onely bring.  
 Parrats may thank us, if they are not mute,  
 They go upon the score.

Man is all symmetric,  
 Full of proportions, one limbe to another,  
 And all to all the world besides:  
 Each part may call the farthest, brother:  
 For head with foot hath private amitie,  
 And both with moons and tides.

<sup>1</sup> That no man builds.—W.

<sup>2</sup> W. has "more fruit." This suggests that "no" in B. and the printed editions may have originated in a miswriting for "mo" (=more).

Nothing hath got so farre,  
 But Man hath <sup>1</sup> caught and kept it, as his prey.  
 His eyes dismount the highest starre :  
 He is in little all the sphere.  
 Herbs gladly cure our flesh ; because that they  
 Finde their acquaintance there.

For us the windes do blow,  
 The earth doth rest, heav'n move, and fountains  
 flow.<sup>2</sup>  
 Nothing we see, but means our good,  
 As our *delight*, or as our *treasure* :  
 The whole is, either our cupboard of *food*,  
 Or cabinet of *pleasure*.

The starres have us to bed ;  
 Night draws the curtain, which the sunne with-  
 draws ;  
 Musick and light attend our head.  
 All things unto our *flesh* are kinde  
 In their *descent* and *being* ; to our *minde*  
 In their *ascent* and *cause*.

Each thing is full of dutie :  
 Waters united are our navigation ;  
 Distinguished, our habitation ;  
 Below, our drink ; above, our meat ;  
 Both are our cleanlinesse. Hath one such  
 beautie ?<sup>3</sup>  
 Then how are all things neat ?

<sup>1</sup> Has.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Earth resteth, heaven moveth, fountains flow.—W.

<sup>3</sup> If one have beauty.—W.

More servants wait on Man,  
 Then he'll take notice of: in ev'ry path  
 He treads down that which doth befriend him,  
 When sicknesse makes him pale and wan.  
 Oh mightie love! Man is one world, and hath  
 Another to attend him.

Since then, my God, thou hast  
 So brave a Palace built; O dwell in it,  
 That it may dwell with thee at last!  
 Till then, afford us so much wit;  
 That, as the world serves us, we may serve thee,  
 And both thy servants be.<sup>1</sup>

## 67. Antiphon <sup>2</sup>

*Chor.* PRAISED be the God of love,  
*Men.* Here below,  
*Angels.* And here above:

*Cho.* Who hath dealt his mercies so,  
*Ang.* To his friend,  
*Men.* And to his foe;

*Cho.* That both grace and glorie tend  
*Ang.* Us of old,  
*Men.* And us in th' end.

*Cho.* The great shepherd of the fold  
*Ang.* Us did make,  
*Men.* For us was sold.

<sup>1</sup> That as ye world to vs is kind and free,  
 So we may bee to Thee.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Ode.—W.



*Cho.* He our foes in pieces brake ;

*Ang.* Him we touch ;

*Men.* And him we take.

*Cho.* Wherefore since that he is such,

*Ang.* We adore,

*Men.* And we do crouch.

*Cho.* Lord, thy praises should be more.<sup>1</sup>

*Men.* We have none,

*Ang.* And we no store.<sup>2</sup>

*Cho.* Praised be the God alone,

Who hath made of two folds one.

## 68. Unkindnesse

**L**ORD, make me coy and tender to offend :

In friendship, first I think, if that agree,

Which I intend,

Unto my friends intent and end.

I would not use a friend, as I use Thee.

If any touch my friend, or his good name ;

It is my honour and my love to free

His blasted<sup>3</sup> fame

From the least spot or thought of blame

I could not use a friend, as I use Thee.

My friend may spit upon my curious floore :

Would he have gold ? I lend it instantly ;

<sup>1</sup> Lord, thou dost deserve much more.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Wee have no store.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Darkned.—W.

But let the poore,  
 And thou within them starve at doore.  
 I cannot use a friend, as I use Thee.

When that my friend pretendeth to a place,  
 I quit my interest, and leave it free :

But when thy grace  
 Sues for my heart, I thee displace,  
 Nor would I use a friend, as I use Thee.

Yet can a friend what thou hast done fulfill ?

O write in brasse, *My God upon a tree*

*His blood did spill*

*Onely to purchase my good-will :*

*Yet use I not my foes, as I use thee.*

## 69. Life

I MADE a posie, while the day ran by :

Here will I smell my remnant out, and tie

My life within this band.

But time did becken to the flowers, and they

By noon most cunningly did steal away,

And wither'd in my hand.

My hand was next to them, and then my heart :

I took, without more thinking, in good part

Times gentle admonition :

Who did so sweetly deaths sad taste convey,

Making my minde to smell my fatall day ;

Yet sugring the suspicion.

Farewell deare flowers, sweetly your time ye  
 spent,  
 Fit, while ye liv'd, for smell or ornament,  
 And after death for cures.  
 I follow straight without complaints or grief,  
 Since if my sent be good, I care not, if  
 It be as short as yours.

## 70. Submission

**B**UT that Thou art my wisdom, Lord,  
 And both mine eyes are thine,  
 My minde would be extreemly stirr'd  
 For missing my designe.

Were it not better to bestow  
 Some place and power on me ?  
 Then should thy praises with me grow,  
 And share in my degree.

But when I thus dispute and grieve,  
 I do resume my fight,  
 And pilfring what I once did give,  
 Disseize thee of thy right.

How know I, if thou shouldst me raise,  
 That I should then raise thee ?  
 Perhaps great places and thy praise  
 Do not so well agree.

Wherefore unto my gift I stand ;  
 I will no more advise :  
 Onely do thou lend me a hand,  
 Since thou hast both mine eyes.

## 71. Justice

**I** CANNOT skill of these thy wayes.  
*Lord, thou didst make me, yet thou woundest me ;*  
*Lord, thou dost wound me, yet thou dost relieve*  
*me :*  
*Lord, thou relievest, yet I die by thee :*  
*Lord, thou dost kill me, yet thou dost reprieve me.*

But when I mark my life and praise,  
 Thy justice me most fitly payes :  
 For, *I do praise thee, yet I praise thee not :*  
*My prayers mean thee, yet my prayers stray :*  
*I would do well, yet sinne the hand hath got :*  
*My soul doth love thee, yet it loves delay.*  
 I cannot skill of these my wayes.

## 72. Charms and Knots

**W**HO reade a chapter when they rise,  
 Shall ne're be troubled with ill<sup>1</sup> eyes.

A poore mans rod, when thou dost ride,  
 Is both a weapon and a guide.<sup>2</sup>

Who shuts his hand, hath lost his gold :  
 Who opens it, hath it twice told.

<sup>1</sup> Sore.—W

<sup>2</sup> A poore man's rod if thou wilt hire,  
 Thy horse shal never fall or tire.—W.

Who goes to bed and doth<sup>1</sup> not pray,  
Maketh two nights to ev'ry day.<sup>2</sup>

Who by aspersions throw a stone  
At th' head<sup>3</sup> of others, hit their own.<sup>4</sup>

Who<sup>5</sup> looks on ground with humble eyes,  
Findes himself there, and seeks to rise.

When th' hair is sweet through pride or lust,  
'The powder doth<sup>6</sup> forget the dust.

Take<sup>7</sup> one from ten, and what remains?  
Ten still, if sermons go for gains.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Does.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Doubles the night and trips by day.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Hart.—W.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *A Priest to the Temple*, c. xxviii., "The parson in contempt":

"He that throws a stone at another, hits himself."

<sup>5</sup> In W. the order of this and the next couplet is reversed.

<sup>6</sup> Does.—W.

<sup>7</sup> In the place of the last two couplets W. has the following:—

Who turnes a trencher, setteth free  
A prisoner crusht w<sup>th</sup> gluttonie.

Take one from ten, and what remains?  
Ten if a sermon goe for gains.

The world thinks all things bigg and tall,  
Grace turnes y<sup>e</sup> optick, then they fall.

A falling starr has lost his place;  
The courtier getts it that has grace.

In small draughts heaven does shine and dwell;  
Who dives on further, may find hell.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Prov. iii. 9, 10. The idea is that the tithes given to the priest are repaid by his services.

In shallow waters heav'n doth show ;  
But who drinks on, to hell may go.

### 73. Affliction

MY God, I read this day,  
That planted Paradise was not so firm,  
As was and is thy floting Ark ; whose stay  
And anchor thou art onely, to confirm  
    And strengthen it in ev'ry age,  
    When waves do rise, and tempests rage.

At first we liv'd in pleasure ;  
Thine own delights thou didst to us impart :  
When we grew wanton, thou didst use displeasure  
To make us thine : yet that we might not part,  
    As we at first did board with thee,  
    Now thou wouldst taste our miserie.

There is but joy and grief ;  
If either will convert us, we are thine :  
Some Angels us'd the first ; if our relief  
Take up the second, then thy double line  
    And sev'rall baits in either kinde  
    Furnish thy table to thy minde.

Affliction then is ours ;  
We are the trees, whom shaking fastens more,  
While blustering windes destroy the wanton  
    bowres,  
And ruffle all their curious knots and store.  
    My God, so temper joy and wo,  
    That thy bright beams may tame thy bow.

## 74. Mortification

HOW soon doth <sup>1</sup> man decay !  
 When clothes are taken from a chest of sweets  
 To swaddle infants, whose young breath  
     Scarce knows the way ;  
 Those clouts <sup>2</sup> are little winding sheets,  
 Which do consign and send them unto death.

When boyes go first to bed,  
 They step into their voluntarie graves,  
     Sleep bindes them fast ; onely their breath  
     Makes them not dead :  
 Successive nights, like rolling waves,  
 Convey them quickly, who are bound for death.

When youth is frank and free,  
 And calls for musick, while his veins do swell,  
     All day exchanging mirth and breath  
     In companie ;  
 That musick summons to the knell,  
 Which shall befriend him at the house of death.

When man grows staid and wise,  
 Getting a house and home, where he may move  
     Within the circle of his breath,  
     Schooling his eyes ;  
 That dumbe inclosure maketh love  
 Unto the coffin, that attends his death.

<sup>1</sup> Does.—W

<sup>2</sup> *Clouts*, i.e. rags ; cf. Jer. xxxviii. 11, 12.

When age grows low and weak,  
 Marking his grave, and thawing ev'ry yeare,  
 Till all do melt, and drown his breath  
 When he would speak ;  
 A chair or litter shows the biere,  
 Which shall convey him to the house <sup>1</sup> of death.

Man, ere he is aware,  
 Hath put together a solemnitie,  
 And drest his herse, while he has breath  
 As yet to spare :  
 Yet Lord, instruct us so to die,  
 That all these dyings may be life in death.

## 75. Decay

**S**WEET were the dayes, when thou didst  
 lodge with Lot,  
 Struggle with Jacob, sit with Gideon,  
 Advise with Abraham, when thy power could not  
 Encounter Moses strong complaints and mone :  
 Thy words were then, *Let me alone.*<sup>2</sup>

One might have sought and found thee presently  
 At some fair oak, or bush, or cave, or well :  
 Is my God this way? No, they would reply :  
 He is to Sinai gone, as we heard tell :  
 List, ye may heare great Aarons bell.

<sup>1</sup> Place.—W.      <sup>2</sup> Ex. xxxii. 10 ; cf. Deut. ix. 14.



But now thou dost thy self immure and close  
 In some one corner of a feeble heart :  
 Where yet both Sinne and Satan, thy old foes,  
 Do pinch and straiten thee, and use much art  
 To gain thy thirds and little part.

I see the world grows old, when as the heat  
 Of thy great love once spread, as in an urn  
 Doth closet up it self, and still retreat,  
 Cold sinne still forcing it, till it return,  
 And calling Justice, all things burn.

76. Miserie<sup>1</sup>

**L**ORD, let the Angels praise thy name.  
 Man is a foolish thing, a foolish thing,  
 Folly and Sinne play all his game.<sup>2</sup>  
 His house still burns, and yet he still doth sing,  
*Man is but grasse,*  
*He knows it, fill the glasse.*

How canst thou brook his foolishnesse ?  
 Why he'l not lose a cup of drink for thee :  
 Bid him but temper his excesse ;  
 Not he : he knows, where he can better be,  
 As he will swear,  
 Then to serve thee in fear.

What strange pollutions doth he wed,  
 And make his own ? as if none knew, but he.  
 No man shall beat into his head,

<sup>1</sup> The Publican.—W.<sup>2</sup> Play out his game.—W.

That thou within his curtains drawn canst see :<sup>1</sup>  
 They are of cloth,  
 Where never yet came moth.

The best of men, turn but thy hand  
 For one poore minute, stumble at a pinne :  
 They would not have their actions scann'd,  
 Nor any sorrow tell them that they sinne,  
 Though it be small,  
 And measure not their fall.

They quarrell thee, and would give over  
 The bargain made to serve thee : but thy love  
 Holds them unto it, and doth cover  
 Their follies with the wing<sup>2</sup> of thy milde Dove,  
 Not suff'ring those  
 Who would, to be thy foes.

My God, Man cannot praise thy name :  
 Thou art all brightness, perfect puritie ;  
 The sunne holds down his head for shame,  
 Dead with eclipses, when we speak of thee :  
 How shall infection  
 Presume on thy perfection ?

As dirtie hands foul all they touch,  
 And those things most, which are most pure  
 and fine :  
 So our clay hearts, ev'n when we crouch  
 To sing thy praises, make them lesse divine.  
 Yet either this,  
 Or none thy portion is.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxxxix. 2.<sup>2</sup> Wings.—W.

Man<sup>1</sup> cannot serve thee ; let him go,  
 And serve the swine : there, there is his delight :  
 He doth not like this vertue, no ;  
 Give him his dirt to wallow in all night :  
                                   These Preachers make  
                                   His head to shoot and ake.

Oh foolish man ! where are thine eyes ?  
 How hast thou lost them in a croud of cares ?  
 Thou pull'st the rug,<sup>2</sup> and wilt not rise,  
 No not to purchase the whole pack of starres :  
                                   There let them shine,  
                                   Thou must go sleep, or dine.

The bird that sees a daintie bowre  
 Made in the tree, where she was wont to sit,  
                                   Wonders and sings, but not his power  
 Who made the arbour : this exceeds her wit.  
                                   But Man doth know  
                                   The spring, whence all things flow :

And yet as though he knew it not,  
 His knowledge winks, and lets his humours reigne ;  
                                   They make his life a constant blot,

<sup>1</sup> In W. this stanza is as follows :—

Man cannot serve thee ; let him goe,  
 And feed the swine w<sup>th</sup> all his mind and might :  
                                   For this he wondrous well doth know  
 They will be kind, and all his pains requite,  
                                   Making him free  
                                   Of that good companie.

<sup>2</sup> Thou lyest warme.—W.

And all the bloud of God to run in vain.

Ah wretch! what verse  
Can thy strange wayes rehearse? <sup>1</sup>

Indeed at first Man was a treasure,  
A box of jewels, shop of rarities,

A ring, whose posie was, *My pleasure* :  
He was a garden in a Paradise :

Glorie and grace  
Did crown his heart and face.

But sinne hath fool'd him. Now he is  
A lump of flesh, without a foot or wing

To raise him to the <sup>2</sup> glimpse of blisse :  
A sick toss'd vessel, dashing on each thing ;

Nay, his own shelf : <sup>3</sup>  
My God, I mean my self.

## 77. Jordan <sup>4</sup>

WHEN first my lines <sup>5</sup> of heav'nly joyes  
made mention,

Such was their lustre, they did so excell,

That I sought out quaint words, and trim  
invention ;

<sup>1</sup> Ah wretched man,  
Who may thy follies span?—W.

<sup>2</sup> A.—W.

<sup>3</sup> *I.e.* reef. Cf the notes on "The Church-Porch,"  
above, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Invention.—W.

<sup>5</sup> Verse —W.

My thoughts began to burnish,<sup>1</sup> sprout,<sup>2</sup> and swell,  
 Curling with metaphors a plain intention,  
 Decking<sup>3</sup> the sense, as if it were to sell.

Thousands of notions in my brain did runne,  
 Off'ring their service, if I were not sped :  
 I often blotted what I had begunne ;  
 This was not quick enough, and that was dead.  
 Nothing could seem too rich to clothe the sunne,  
 Much lesse those joyes which trample on his head.

As<sup>4</sup> flames do work and winde, when they ascend,  
 So did I weave my self into the sense.  
 But while I bustled, I might heare a friend  
 Whisper, *How wide is all this long pretence !*  
*There is in love a sweetnesse readie penn'd :*  
*Copie out onely that, and save expense.*

## 78. Prayer

OF what an easie quick accesse,  
 My blessed Lord, art thou !<sup>5</sup> how suddenly  
 May our requests thine eare<sup>6</sup> invade !

<sup>1</sup> *Burnish, i.e.* spread out. So Fuller : " We must not all run up in height like a hop-pole, but also burnish and spread in breadth."—*Joseph's Coat.*

<sup>2</sup> Spredd.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Praising.

<sup>4</sup> In W. this stanza is as follows :—

As flames do work and winde when they ascend,  
 So I bespoke me much insinuation ;  
 But while I bustled I might heare a friend  
 Whisper, how wide is all this preparation !  
 There is in love a sweetnesse ready penn'd ;  
 Copy out that, there needs no alteration.

<sup>5</sup> Art thou, my blessed King !—W. <sup>6</sup> Eares.—W.

To shew that state dislikes not easinesse.  
 If I but lift mine eyes, my suit is made :  
 Thou canst no more not heare, then thou canst die.

Of what supreme almightie power  
 Is thy great arm which spans the east and west,  
 And tacks the centre to the sphere !  
 By it do all things live their measur'd<sup>1</sup> hour :  
 We cannot ask the thing, which is not there,  
 Blaming the shallownesse of our request.

Of what unmeasureable love  
 Art thou possest, who, when thou couldst not die,  
 Wert fain to take our flesh and curse,  
 And for our sakes in person sinne reprove,  
 That by destroying that which ty'd thy purse,  
 Thou mightst make way for liberalitie !

Since then these three wait on thy throne,  
*Ease, Power, and Love* ; I value prayer so,  
 That were I to leave all but one,  
 Wealth, fame, endowments, vertues, all should go ;  
 I and deare prayer would together dwell,  
 And quickly gain, for each inch lost, an ell.

## 79. Obedience

MY God, if writings may  
 Convey a Lordship any way  
 Whither the buyer and the seller please ;  
 Let it not thee displease,  
 If this poore paper do as much as they.

<sup>1</sup> Silly.—W.

On it my heart doth bleed  
 As many lines, as there doth need <sup>1</sup>  
 To passe it self and all it hath to thee,  
 To which I do agree,  
 And here present it as my speciall deed.

If that hereafter Pleasure  
 Cavill, and claim her part and measure,  
 As if this passed with a reservation,  
 Or some such words in fashion ;  
 I here exclude <sup>2</sup> the wrangler from thy treasure.

O let thy sacred will  
 All thy delight in me fulfill !  
 Let me not think an action mine own way,  
 But as thy love shall sway,  
 Resigning up the rudder to thy skill.

Lord, what is man to thee,  
 That thou shouldst minde a rotten tree ?  
 Yet since thou canst not choose but see my actions,  
 So great are thy perfections,  
 Thou mayst as well my actions guide, as see.

Besides, thy death and bloud  
 Show'd a strange love to all our good :  
 Thy sorrows were in earnest ; no faint proffer,  
 Or superficial offer  
 Of what we might not take, or be withstood.

Wherefore I all forego :  
 To one word onely I say, No :

<sup>1</sup> As it does need.—W.      <sup>2</sup> Shutt out.—W.

Where in the deed there was an intimation  
 Of a *gift* or *donation*,  
 Lord, let it now by way of *purchase* go.

He that will passe his land,  
 As I have mine, may set his hand  
 And heart unto this deed, when he hath <sup>1</sup> read ;  
 And make the purchase spread  
 To both our goods, if he to it will stand.

How happie were my part,  
 If some kinde man would thrust his heart  
 Into these lines ; till in heav'ns court of rolls  
 They were by winged souls  
 Entred for both, farre above their desert !

### 80. Conscience <sup>2</sup>

PEACE pratler, do not lowre :  
 Not a fair look, but thou dost call it foul :  
 Not a sweet dish, but thou dost call it sowre :  
 Musick to thee doth howl.  
 By listning to thy chatting fears  
 I have both lost mine eyes and eares.

Pratler, no more, I say :  
 My thoughts must work, but like a noiselesse  
 sphere ;

<sup>1</sup> Doth.—W.

<sup>2</sup> From this point onwards none of the poems are found in W. until "The Elixir" (No. 156).



Harmonious peace must rock them all the day :  
 No room for pratlers there.  
 If thou persistest, I will tell thee,  
 That I have physick to expell thee.

And the receipt shall be  
 My Saviours bloud : when ever at his board  
 I do but taste it, straight it cleanseth me,  
 And leaves thee not a word ;  
 No, not a tooth or nail to scratch,  
 And at my actions carp, or catch.

Yet if thou talkest still,  
 Besides my physick, know there's some for thee :  
 Some wood and nails to make a staffe or bill  
 For those that trouble me :  
 The bloudie crosse of my deare Lord  
 Is both my physick and my sword.

## 81. Sion

**L**ORD, with what glorie wast thou serv'd  
 of old,  
 When Solomons temple stood and flourished !  
 Where most things were of purest gold ;  
 The wood was all embellished  
 With flowers and carvings, mysticall and rare :  
 All show'd the builders, crav'd the seers care.

Yet all this glorie, all this pomp and state  
 Did not affect thee much, was not thy aim ;

Something there was, that sow'd debate :  
 Wherefore thou quitt'st thy ancient claim :  
 And now thy Architecture meets with sinne ;  
 For all thy frame and fabrick is within.

There thou art struggling with a peevish heart,  
 Which sometimes crosseth thee, thou sometimes it :

The fight is hard on either part.

Great God doth fight, he doth submit.  
 All Solomons sea of brasse and world of stone  
 Is not so deare to thee as one good grone.

And truly brasse and stones are heavie things,  
 Tombes for the dead, not temples fit for thee :

But grones are quick, and full of wings,  
 And all their motions upward be ;  
 And ever as they mount, like larks they sing ;  
 The note is sad, yet musick for a king.

## 82. Home

COME Lord, my head doth burn, my heart  
 is sick,

While thou dost ever, ever stay :  
 Thy long deferrings wound me to the quick,  
 My spirit gaspeth night and day.

O show thy self to me,  
 Or take me up to thee !

How canst thou stay, considering the pace  
 The blood did make, which thou didst  
 waste ?

When I behold it trickling down thy face,  
I never saw thing make such haste.  
O show thy self to me,  
Or take me up to thee!

When man was lost, thy pitie lookt about  
To see what help in th' earth or skie :  
But there was none ; at least no help without :  
The help did in thy bosome lie.  
O show thy, &c.

There lay thy sonne : and must he leave that nest,  
That hive of sweetnesse, to remove  
Thraldome from those, who would not at a feast  
Leave one poore apple for thy love ?  
O show thy, &c.

He did, he came : O my Redeemer deare,  
After all this canst thou be strange ?  
So many yeares baptiz'd, and not appeare ?  
As if thy love could fail or change.  
O show thy, &c.

Yet if thou stayest still, why must I stay ?  
My God, what is this world to me ?  
This world of wo ? hence all ye clouds, away,  
Away ; I must get up and see.  
O show thy, &c.

What is this weary world ; this meat and drink,  
That chains us by the teeth so fast ?  
What is this woman-kinde, which I can wink  
Into a blacknesse and distaste ?  
O show thy, &c.

With one small sigh thou gav'st me th' other day  
 I blasted all the joyes about me :  
 And scouling on them as they pin'd away,  
 Now come again, said I, and flout me.  
 O show thy self to me,  
 Or take me up to thee !

Nothing but drought and dearth, but bush and  
 brake,  
 Which way so-e're I look, I see.  
 Some may dream merrily, but when they wake,  
 They dresse themselves and come to thee.  
 O show thy, &c.

We talk of harvests ; there are no such things,  
 But when we leave our corn and hay :  
 There is no fruitfull yeare, but that which brings  
 The last and lov'd, though dreadfull day.  
 O show thy, &c.

Oh loose this frame, this knot of man untie !  
 That my free soul may use her wing,  
 Which now is pinion'd with mortalitie,  
 As an intangled, hamper'd thing.  
 O show thy, &c.

What have I left, that I should stay and grone ?  
 The most of me to heav'n is fled :  
 My thoughts and joyes are all packt up and  
 gone,  
 And for their old acquaintance plead.  
 O show thy, &c.

Come dearest Lord, passe not this holy season,  
 My flesh and bones and joynts do pray :  
 And ev'n my verse, when by the ryme and reason  
 The word is, *Stay*,<sup>1</sup> sayes ever, *Come*.  
 O show thy self to me,  
 Or take me up to thee !

### 83. The British Church

**I** JOY, deare Mother, when I view  
 Thy perfect lineaments, and hue  
 Both sweet and bright.

Beautie in thee takes up her place,  
 And dates her letters from thy face,  
 When she doth write.

A fine aspect in fit array,  
 Neither too mean, nor yet too gay,  
 Shows who is best.

Outlandish looks may not compare :  
 For all they either painted are,  
 Or else undrest.

She on the hills, which wantonly  
 Allureth all, in hope to be  
 By her preferr'd,

Hath kiss'd so long her painted shrines,  
 That ev'n her face by kissing shines,  
 For her reward.

<sup>1</sup>To rhyme with *pray* in the second line of the stanza ; cf. MacDonald's *England's Antiphon*, p. 184.

She in the valley is so shie  
 Of dressing, that her hair doth lie  
 About her eares :

While she avoids her neighbours pride,  
 She wholly goes on th' other side,  
 And nothing wears.

But dearest Mother, (what those misse)  
 The mean thy praise and glorie is,  
 And long may be.

Blessed be God, whose love it was  
 To double-moat thee with his grace,  
 And none but thee.

#### 84. The Quip

**T**HE merrie world did on a day  
 With his train-bands and mates agree  
 To meet together, where I lay,  
 And all in sport to geere at me.

First, Beautie crept into a rose,  
 Which when I pluckt not, Sir, said she,  
 Tell me, I pray, Whose hands are those ?  
 But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.<sup>1</sup>

Then Money came, and chinking still,  
 What tune is this, poore man ? said he :  
 I heard in Musick you had skill.  
 But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 15 (P.B.V.).

Then came brave Glorie puffing by  
 In silks that whistled, who but he?  
 He scarce allow'd me half an eie.  
 But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then came quick Wit and Conversation,  
 And he would needs a comfort be,  
 And, to be short, make an oration.  
 But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Yet when the houre of thy designe  
 To answer these fine things shall come ;  
 Speak not at large, say, I am thine :  
 And then they have their answer home.

## 85. Vanitie

**P**OOORE silly soul, whose hope and head lies  
 low ;

Whose flat delights on earth do creep and grow ;  
 To whom the starres shine not so fair, as eyes ;  
 Nor solid work, as false embroyderies ;  
 Heark and beware, lest what you now do measure  
 And write for sweet, prove a most sowre dis-  
 pleasure.

O heare betimes, lest thy relenting  
 May come too late !

To purchase heaven for repenting,  
 Is no hard rate.

If souls be made of earthly mold,  
 Let them love gold ;

If born on high,  
 Let them unto their kindred flie :  
 For they can never be at rest,  
 Till they regain their ancient nest.  
 Then silly soul take heed ; for earthly joy  
 Is but a bubble, and makes thee a boy.

## 86. The Dawning

**A**WAKE sad heart, whom sorrow ever  
 drowns ;

Take up thine eyes, which feed on earth ;  
 Unfold thy forehead gather'd into frowns :

Thy Saviour comes, and with him mirth :  
 Awake, awake ;

And with a thankfull heart his comforts take.

But thou dost still lament, and pine, and  
 crie ;

And feel his death, but not his victorie.

Arise sad heart ; if thou dost not withstand,

Christs resurrection thine may be :

Do not by hanging down break from the hand,  
 Which as it riseth, raiseth thee :

Arise, arise ;

And with his buriall-linen drie thine eyes :

Christ left his grave-clothes, that we might,  
 when grief

Draws tears, or bloud, not want an handker-  
 chief.



## 87. Jesu

**J**ESU is in my heart, his sacred name  
 Is deeply carved there : but th' other week  
 A great affliction broke the little frame,  
 Ev'n all to pieces : which I went to seek :  
 And first I found the corner, where was *J*,  
 After, where *E S*, and next where *U* was graved.  
 When I had got these parcels, instantly  
 I sat me down to spell them, and perceived  
 That to my broken heart he was *I ease you*,  
 And to my whole is *JESU*.

## 88. Businesse

**C**ANST be idle? canst thou play,  
 Foolish soul who sinn'd to day?

Rivers run, and springs each one  
 Know their home, and get them gone :  
 Hast thou tears, or hast thou none?

If, poore soul, thou hast no tears ;  
 Would thou hadst no faults or fears !  
 Who hath these, those ill forbears.

Windes still work : it is their plot,  
 Be the season cold, or hot :  
 Hast thou sighs, or hast thou not?

If thou hast no sighs or grones,  
 Would thou hadst no flesh and bones!  
 Lesser pains scape greater ones.

But if yet thou idle be,  
 Foolish soul, Who di'd for thee?

Who did leave his Fathers throne  
 To assume thy flesh and bone;  
 Had he life, or had he none?

If he had not liv'd for thee,  
 Thou hadst di'd most wretchedly;  
 And two deaths had been thy fee.

He so farre thy good did plot,  
 That his own self he forgot.  
 Did he die, or did he not?

If he had not di'd for thee,  
 Thou hadst liv'd in miserie.  
 Two lives worse then ten deaths be.

And hath any space<sup>1</sup> of breath  
 'Twixt his sinnes and Saviours death?

He that loseth gold, though drosse,  
 Tells to all he meets, his crosse:  
 He that sinnes, hath he no losse?

<sup>1</sup> Spare.—B.

He that findes a silver vein,  
 Thinks on it, and thinks again :  
 Brings thy Saviours death no gain ?

Who in heart not ever kneels,  
 Neither sinne nor Saviour feels.

## 89. Dialogue

SWEETEST Saviour, if my soul  
 Were but worth the having,  
 Quickly should I then controll  
     Any thought of waving.  
 But when all my care and pains  
 Cannot give the name of gains  
 To thy wretch so full of stains ;  
 What delight or hope remains ?

*What (childe) is the ballance thine,  
 Thine the poise and measure ?  
 If I say, Thou shalt be mine ;  
     Finger not my treasure.*

*What the gains in having thee  
 Do amount to, onely he,  
 Who for man was sold, can see ;  
 That transferr'd th' accounts to me.*

But as I can see no merit,  
     Leading to this favour :  
 So the way to fit me for it,  
     Is beyond my savour.

As the reason then is thine ;  
 So the way is none of mine :  
 I disclaim the whole designe :  
 Sinne disclaims and I resigne.

*That is all, if that I could  
 Get without repining ;  
 And my clay my creature would  
 Follow my resigning.  
 That as I did freely part  
 With my glorie and desert,  
 Left all joyes to feel all smart—  
 Ah! no more: thou break'st my heart.*

### 90. Dulnesse

**W**HY do I languish thus, drooping and dull,  
 As if I were all earth ?  
 O give me quicknesse, that I may with mirth  
 Praise thee brim-full !

The wanton lover in a curious strain  
 Can praise his fairest fair ;  
 And with quaint metaphors her curled hair  
 Curl o're again.

Thou art my lovelinesse, my life, my light,  
 Beautie alone to me :  
 Thy bloody death and undeserv'd, makes thee  
 Pure red and white.

When all perfections as but one appeare,  
     That those thy form doth show,  
 The very dust, where thou dost tread and go,  
     Makes beauties here ;

Where are my lines then? my approaches? views?  
     Where are my window-songs?  
 Lovers are still pretending, and ev'n wrongs  
     Sharpen their Muse :

But I am lost in flesh, whose sugred lyes  
     Still mock me, and grow bold :  
 Sure thou didst put a minde there, if I could  
     Finde where it lies.

Lord, cleare thy gift, that with a constant wit  
     I may but look towards thee :  
*Look* onely ; for to *love* thee, who can be,  
     What angel fit ?

## 91. Love-joy

**A**S on a window late I cast mine eye,  
 I saw a vine drop grapes with *J* and *C*  
 Anneal'd on every bunch. One standing by  
 Ask'd what it meant. I (who am never loth  
 To spend my iudgement) said, It seem'd to me  
 To be the bodie and the letters both  
 Of *Joy* and *Charitie*. Sir, you have not miss'd,  
 The man reply'd ; It figures *JESUS CHRIST*.

## 92. Providence

O SACRED Providence, who from end to  
end

Strongly and sweetly movest !<sup>1</sup> shall I write,  
And not of thee, through whom my fingers bend  
To hold my quill? shall they not do thee right?

Of all the creatures both in sea and land  
Onely to Man thou hast made known thy wayes,  
And put the penne alone into his hand,  
And made him Secretarie<sup>2</sup> of thy praise.

Beasts fain would sing; birds dittie to their notes;  
Trees would be tuning on their native lute  
To thy renown: but all their hands and throats  
Are brought to Man, while they are lame and  
mute.

Man is the worlds high Priest: he doth present  
The sacrifice for all; while they below  
Unto the service mutter an assent,  
Such as springs use that fall, and windes that  
blow.

He that to praise and laud thee doth refrain,  
Doth not refrain unto himself alone,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Wisdom, viii. 1: "Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily: and sweetly doth she order all things." "Attingit ergo a fine usque ad finem fortiter, et disponit omnia suaviter."—Vulg.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the expression used of Bacon—"the great secretary of nature," in Walton's Life of Herbert, above, p. 1.

But robs a thousand who would praise thee fain,  
And doth commit a world of sinne in one.

The beasts say, Eat me : but, if beasts must teach,  
The tongue is yours to eat, but mine to praise.  
The trees say, Pull me : but the hand you stretch,  
Is mine to write, as it is yours to raise.

Wherefore, most sacred Spirit, I here present  
For me and all my fellows praise to thee :  
And just it is that I should pay the rent,  
Because the benefit accrues to me.

We all acknowledge both thy power and love  
To be exact, transcendent, and divine ;  
Who dost so strongly and so sweetly move,  
While all things have their will, yet none but  
thine.

For either thy *command*, or thy *permission*  
Lay hands on all : they are thy *right* and *left*.  
The first puts on with speed and expedition ;  
The other curbs sinnes stealing pace and theft.

Nothing escapes them both ; all must appeare,  
And be dispos'd, and dress'd, and tun'd by thee,  
Who sweetly temper'st all. If we could heare  
Thy skill and art, what musick would it be !

Thou art in small things great, not small in any :  
Thy even praise can neither rise, nor fall.  
Thou art in all things one, in each thing many :  
For thou art infinite in one and all.

Tempests are calm to thee ; they know thy hand,  
 And hold it fast, as children do their fathers,  
 Which crie and follow. Thou hast made poore  
 sand

Check the proud sea, ev'n when it swells and  
 gathers.

Thy cupboard serves the world : the meat is set,  
 Where all may reach : no beast but knows his  
 feed.

Birds teach us hawking ; fishes have their net :  
 The great prey on the lesse, they on some weed.

Nothing ingendred doth prevent his meat :  
 Flies have their table spread, ere they appeare.  
 Some creatures have in winter what to eat ;  
 Others do sleep, and envie not their cheer.

How finely dost thou times and seasons spin,  
 And make a twist checker'd with night and day !  
 Which as it lengthens windes, and windes us in,  
 As bouls go on, but turning all the way.

Each creature hath a wisdome for his good.  
 The pigeons feed their tender off-spring, crying,  
 When they are callow ; but withdraw their food  
 When they are fledge, that need may teach them  
 flying.

Bees work for man ; and yet they never bruise  
 Their masters flower, but leave it, having done,  
 As fair as ever, and as fit to use ;  
 So both the flower doth stay, and hony run.



Sheep eat the grasse, and dung the ground for  
more :

Trees after bearing drop their leaves for soil :  
Springs vent their streams, and by expense get  
store :

Clouds cool by heat, and baths by cooling boil.

Who hath the vertue to expresse the rare  
And curious vertues both of herbs and stones ?  
Is there an herb for that ? O that thy care  
Would show a root, that gives expressions !

And if an herb hath power, what have the starres ?  
A rose, besides his beautie, is a cure.

Doubtlesse our plagues and plentie, peace and  
warres

Are there much surer then our art is sure.

Thou hast hid metals : man may take them  
thence ;

But at his perill : when he digs the place,  
He makes a grave ; as if the thing had sense,  
And threatned man, that he should fill the  
space.

Ev'n poysons praise thee. Should a thing be  
lost ?

Should creatures want for want of heed their due ?  
Since where are poysons, antidots are most :  
The help stands close, and keeps the fear in view.

The sea, which seems to stop the traveller,  
Is by a ship the speedier passage made.

The windes, who think they rule the mariner,  
Are rul'd by him, and taught to serve his trade.

And as thy house is full, so I adore  
Thy curious art in marshalling thy goods.  
The hills with health abound; the vales with  
store;  
The South with marble; North with fures and  
woods.

Hard things are glorious; easie things good  
cheap.  
The common all men have; that which is rare,  
Men therefore seek to have, and care to keep.  
The healthy frosts with summer-fruits compare.

Light without winde is glasse: warm without  
weight  
Is wooll and fures: cool without closenesse,  
shade:  
Speed without pains, a horse: tall without height,  
A servile hawk: low without losse, a spade.

All countreys have enough to serve their need:  
If they seek fine things, thou dost make them run  
For their offence; and then dost turn their speed  
To be commerce and trade from sunne to sunne.

Nothing wears clothes, but Man; nothing doth  
need  
But he to wear them. Nothing useth fire,  
But Man alone, to show his heav'nly breed:  
And onely he hath fuell in desire.

When th' earth was dry, thou mad'st a sea of  
wet :

When that lay gather'd, thou didst broach the  
mountains :

When yet some places could no moisture get,  
The windes grew gard'ners, and the clouds good  
fountains.

Rain, do not hurt my flowers; but gently  
spend

Your hony drops : presse not to smell them  
here :

When they are ripe, their odour will ascend,  
And at your lodging with their thanks appeare.

How harsh are thorns to pears! and yet they  
make

A better hedge, and need less reparation.

How smooth are silks compared with a stake,  
Or with a stone! yet make no good foundation.

Sometimes thou dost divide thy gifts to man,  
Sometimes unite. The Indian nut alone  
Is clothing, meat and trencher, drink and kan,  
Boat, cable, sail and needle, all in one.

Most herbs that grow in brooks, are hot and  
dry.

Cold fruits warm kernells help against the  
winde.

The lemmons juice and rinde cure mutually.

The whey of milk doth loose, the milk doth  
binde.

Thy creatures leap not, but expresse a feast,  
Where all the guests sit close, and nothing  
wants.

Frogs marry fish and flesh ; bats, bird and beast ;  
Sponges, non-sense and sense ; mines, th' earth  
and plants.

To show thou art not bound, as if thy lot  
Were worse then ours ; sometimes thou shiftest  
hands.

Most things move th' under-jaw ; the Crocodile  
not.

Most things sleep lying ; th' Elephant leans or  
stands.

But who hath praise enough ? nay who hath  
any ?

None can expresse thy works, but he that knows  
them :

And none can know thy works, which are so  
many,

And so complete, but onely he that owes them.

All things that are, though they have sev'ral  
wayes,

Yet in their being joyn with one advise  
To honour thee : and so I give thee praise  
In all my other hymnes, but in this twice.

Each thing that is, although in use and name  
It go for one, hath many wayes in store  
To honour thee ; and so each hymne thy fame  
Extolleth many wayes, yet this one more.

3. Hope<sup>1</sup>

I GAVE to Hope a watch of mine : but he  
     An anchor gave to me.  
 Then an old prayer-book I did present :  
     And he an optick sent.  
 With that I gave a viall full of tears :  
     But he a few green eares :  
 Ah Loyterer ! I'le no more, no more I'le bring :  
     I did expect a ring.

## 94. Sinnes round

SORRIE I am, my God, sorrie I am,  
     That my offences course it in a ring.  
 My thoughts are working like a busie flame,  
 Untill their cockatrice they hatch and bring :  
 And when they once have perfected their  
     draughts,  
 My words take fire from my inflamed thoughts.  
 My words take fire from my inflamed thoughts,  
 Which spit it forth like the Sicilian hill.  
 They vent the wares, and passe them with their  
     faults,  
 And by their breathing ventilate the ill.  
 But words suffice not, where are lewd intentions :  
 My hands do joyn to finish the inventions.

<sup>1</sup> For various suggestions as to the meaning of this enigmatical poem, see *Notes and Queries*, first series, ix. 154; x. 18; x. 333.

My hands do joyne to finish the inventions :  
 And so my sinnes ascend three stories high,  
 As Babel grew, before there were dissentions.  
 Yet ill deeds loyter not : for they supplie  
 New thoughts of sinning : wherefore, to my  
     shame,  
 Sorrie I am, my God, sorrie I am.

## 95. Time

**M**EETING with Time, slack thing, said I,  
     Thy sithe is dull ; whet it for shame.  
 No marvell Sir, he did replie,  
 If it at length deserve some blame :  
     But where one man would have me grinde it,  
     Twentie for one too sharp do finde it.

Perhaps some such of old did passe,  
 Who above all things lov'd this life ;  
 To whom thy sithe a hatchet was,  
 Which now is but a pruning-knife.  
     Christs coming hath made man thy debter,  
     Since by thy cutting he grows better.

And in his blessing thou art blest :  
 For where thou onely wert before  
 An executioner at best ;  
 Thou art a gard'ner now, and more,  
     An usher to convey our souls  
     Beyond the utmost starres and poles.

And this is that makes life so long,  
 While it detains us from our God.  
 Ev'n pleasures here increase the wrong,  
 And length of dayes lengthen the rod.

Who wants the place, where God doth dwell,  
 Partakes already half of hell.

Of what strange length must that needs be,  
 Which ev'n eternitie excludes!

Thus farre Time heard me patiently :  
 Then chafing said, This man deludes :  
 What do I hear before his doore ?  
 He doth not crave lesse time, but more.

## 96. Gratefulness

**T**HOU that hast giv'n so much to me,  
 Give one thing more, a gratefull heart,<sup>1</sup>  
 See how thy beggar works on thee  
 By art.

He makes thy gifts occasion more,  
 And sayes, If he in this be crost,  
 All thou hast giv'n him heretofore  
 Is lost.

But thou didst reckon, when at first  
 Thy word our hearts and hands did crave,  
 What it would come to at the worst  
 To save.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Shakespeare's *Henry VI.* Part II. Act I. sc. i. :

“ O Lord, that lends me life,  
 Lend me a heart replete with thankfulness ! ”

Perpetuall knockings at thy doore,  
 Tears sullyng thy transparent rooms,  
 Gift upon gift, much would have more,  
 And comes.

This not withstanding, thou wentst on,  
 And didst allow us all our noise :  
 Nay thou hast made a sigh and grone  
 Thy joyes.

Not that thou hast not still above  
 Much better tunes, then grones can make ;  
 But that these countrey-aïres thy love  
 Did take.

Wherefore I crie, and crie again ;  
 And in no quiet canst thou be,  
 Till I a thankfull heart obtain  
 Of thee :

Not thankfull, when it pleaseth me ;  
 As if thy blessings had spare dayes :  
 But such a heart, whose pulse may be  
 Thy praise.

## 97. Peace

SWEET Peace, where dost thou dwell? I  
 humbly crave,

Let me once know.

I sought thee in a secret cave,  
 And ask'd, if Peace were there.

A hollow winde did seem to answer, No :  
 Go seek elsewhere.







Onely an open breast  
 Doth shut them out, so that they cannot enter ;  
 Or, if they enter, cannot rest,  
 But quickly seek some new adventure.  
 Smooth open hearts no fastning have ; but fiction  
 Doth give a hold and handle to affliction.

Wherefore my faults and sinnes,  
 Lord, I acknowledge ; take thy plagues away :  
 For since confession pardon winnes,  
 I challenge here the brightest day,  
 The clearest diamond : let them do their best,  
 They shall be thick and cloudie to my breast.

## 99. Giddinesse

OH, what a thing is man ! how farre from  
 power,  
 From setled peace and rest !  
 He is some twentie sev'rall men at least  
 Each sev'rall houre.

One while he counts of heav'n, as of his  
 treasure :  
 But then a thought creeps in,  
 And calls him coward, who for fear of sinne  
 Will lose a pleasure.

Now he will fight it out, and to the warres ;  
 Now eat his bread in peace,  
 And snudge<sup>1</sup> in quiet : now he scorns increase ;  
 Now all day spares.

<sup>1</sup> *Snudge*, i.e. lie snug.

He builds a house, which quickly down must  
 go,  
 As if a whirlwinde blew  
 And crusht the building : and it's partly true,  
 His minde is so.

O what a sight were Man, if his attires  
 Did alter with his minde ;  
 And like a Dolphins skinne, his clothes com-  
 bin'd  
 With his desires !

Surely if each one saw anothers heart,  
 There would be no commerce,  
 No sale or bargain passe : all would disperse,  
 And live apart.

Lord, mend or rather make us : one creation  
 Will not suffice our turn :  
 Except thou make us dayly, we shall spurn  
 Our own salvation.

## 100. The bunch of grapes

**J**OY, I did lock thee up : but some bad man  
 Hath let thee out again :  
 And now, me thinks, I am where I began  
 Sev'n yeares ago : one vogue and vein,  
 One aire of thoughts usurps my brain.  
 I did toward Canaan draw ; but now I am  
 Brought back to the Red sea, the sea of shame.

For as the Jews of old by Gods command  
 Travell'd, and saw no town :  
 So now each Christian hath his journeys spann'd :  
 Their storie pennes and sets us down.  
 A single deed is small renown.  
 Gods works are wide, and let in future times ;  
 His ancient justice overflows our crimes.

Then have we too our guardian fires and clouds ;  
 Our Scripture-dew drops fast :  
 We have our sands and serpents, tents and  
 shrowds ;  
 Alas ! our murmurings come not last.  
 But where's the cluster ? where's the taste  
 Of mine inheritance ? Lord, if I must borrow,  
 Let me as well take up their joy, as sorrow.

But can he want the grape, who hath the wine ?  
 I have their fruit and more.  
 Blessed be God, who prosper'd *Noahs* vine,  
 And made it bring forth grapes good store.  
 But much more him I must adore,  
 Who of the laws sowre juice sweet wine did  
 make,  
 Ev'n God himself, being pressed for my sake.

### 101. Love unknown

**D**EARE Friend, sit down, the tale is long  
 and sad :  
 And in my faintings I presume your loue  
 Will more complie, then help. A Lord I had,

And have, of whom some grounds which may  
improve,

I hold for two lives, and both lives in me.

To him I brought a dish of fruit one day,

And in the middle plac'd my heart. But he

(I sigh to say)

Lookt on a seruant, who did know his eye

Better then you know me, or (which is one)

Then I my self. The servant instantly

Quitting the fruit, seiz'd on my heart alone,

And threw it in a font, wherein did fall

A stream of bloud, which issu'd from the side

Of a great rock : I well remember all,

And have good cause : there it was dipt and  
di'd,

And washt, and wrung : the very wringing yet

Enforceth tears. *Your heart was foul, I fear.*

Indeed 'tis true. I did and do commit

Many a fault more then my lease will bear ;

Yet still askt pardon, and was not deni'd.

But you shall heare. After my heart was well,

And clean and fair, as I one even-tide

(I sigh to tell)

Walkt by my self abroad, I saw a large

And spacious fornace flaming, and thereon

A boyling caldron, round about whose verge

Was in great letters set *AFFLICTION*.

The greatnesse shew'd the owner. So I went

To fetch a sacrifice out of my fold,

Thinking with that, which I did thus present,

To warm his love, which I did fear grew cold.

But as my heart did tender it, the man

Who was to take it from me, slipt his hand,

And threw my heart into the scalding pan ;  
 My heart, that brought it (do you understand ?)  
 The offerers heart. *Your heart was hard, I  
 fear.*

Indeed 'tis true. I found a callous matter  
 Began to spread and to expatiate there :  
 But with a richer drug, then scalding water,  
 I bath'd it often, ev'n with holy bloud,  
 Which at a board, while many drunk bare wine,  
 A friend did steal into my cup for good,  
 Ev'n taken inwardly, and most divine  
 To supple hardnesses. But at the length  
 Out of the caldron getting, soon I fled  
 Unto my house, where to repair the strength  
 Which I had lost, I hasted to my bed.

But when I thought to sleep out all these faults  
 (I sigh to speak)  
 I found that some had stuff'd the bed with  
 thoughts,

I would say *thorns*. Deare, could my heart  
 not break,

When with my pleasures ev'n my rest was gone ?  
 Full well I understood, who had been there :  
 For I had giv'n the key to none, but one :  
 It must be he. *Your heart was dull, I fear.*

Indeed a slack and sleepeie state of minde  
 Did oft possesse me, so that when I pray'd,  
 Though my lips went, my heart did stay be-  
 hinde.

But all my scores were by another paid,  
 Who took the debt upon him. *Truly, Friend,  
 For ought I heare, your Master shows to you  
 More favour then you wot of. Mark the end.*

*The Font did onely, what was old, renew .  
 The Caldron suppld, what was grown too hard :  
 The Thorns did quicken, what was grown too  
 dull :*

*All did but strive to mend, what you had marr'd.  
 Wherefore be cheer'd, and praise him to the full  
 Each day, each houre, each moment of the week,  
 Who fain would have you be, new, tender, quick.*

## 102. Mans medley

**H**EARK, how the birds do sing,  
 And woods do ring.

All creatures have their joy : and man hath his.  
 Yet if we rightly measure,  
 Mans joy and pleasure  
 Rather hereafter, then in present, is.

To this life things of sense  
 Make their pretence :  
 In th' other Angels have a right by birth :  
 Man ties them both alone,  
 And makes them one,  
 With th' one hand touching heav'n, with th' other  
 earth.

In soul he mounts and flies,  
 In flesh he dies.  
 He wears a stuffe whose thread is coarse and  
 round,  
 But trimm'd with curious lace,  
 And should take place  
 After the trimming, not the stuffe and ground.



Not, that he may not here  
     Taste of the cheer,  
 But as birds drink, and straight lift up their head,  
     So must he sip and think  
     Of better drink  
 He may attain to, after he is dead.

But as his joyes are double ;  
     So is his trouble.  
 He hath two winters, other things but one :  
     Both frosts and thoughts do nip,  
     And bite his lip ;  
 And he of all things fears two deaths alone.

Yet ev'n the greatest griefs  
     May be reliefs,  
 Could he but take them right, and in their wayes.  
     Happie is he, whose heart  
     Hath found the art  
 To turn his double pains to double praise.

### 103. The Storm

**I**F as the windes and waters here below  
     Do flie and flow,  
 My sighs and tears as busie were above ;  
     Sure they would move  
 And much affect thee, as tempestuous times  
 Amaze poore mortals, and object <sup>1</sup> their crimes.

<sup>1</sup> *Object*, i.e. place before their faces.

Starres have tneir storms, ev'n in a high degree,  
As well as we.

A throbbing conscience spurred by remorse  
Hath a strange force :  
It quits the earth, and mounting more and more,  
Dares to assault thee, and besiege thy doore.

There it stands knocking, to thy musicks wrong,  
And drowns the song.

Glorie and honour are set by till it  
An answer get.

Poets have wrong'd poore storms : such dayes  
are best ;

They purge the aire without, within the breast.

#### 104. Paradise

**I** BLESSE thee, Lord, because I GROW  
Among thy trees, which in a ROW  
To thee both fruit and order OW.

What open force, or hidden CHARM  
Can blast my fruit, or bring me HARM,  
While the inclosure is thine ARM ?

Inclose me still for fear I START.  
Be to me rather sharp and TART,  
Then let me want thy hand and ART.

When thou dost greater judgements SPARE,  
And with thy knife but prune and PARE,  
Ev'n fruitfull trees more fruitfull ARE.

Such sharpnes shows the sweetest F R E N D :  
 Such cuttings rather heal then R E N D :  
 And such beginnings touch their E N D .

## 105. The Method

P O O R E heart, lament.  
 For since thy God refuseth still,  
 There is some rub, some discontent,  
 Which cools his will.

Thy Father *could*  
 Quickly effect, what thou dost move ;  
 For he is *Power* : and sure he *would* ;  
 For he is *Love*.

Go search this thing,  
 Tumble thy breast, and turn thy book.  
 If thou hadst lost a glove or ring,  
 Wouldst thou not look ?

What do I see  
 Written above there ? *Yesterday*  
*I did behave me carelesly,*  
*When I did pray.*

And should Gods eare  
 To such indifferents chained be,  
 Who do not their own motions heare ?  
 Is God lesse free ?

But stay! what's there?  
*Late when I would have something done,  
 I had a motion to forbear,  
 Yet I went on.*

And should Gods eare,  
 Which needs not man, be ty'd to those  
 Who heare not him, but quickly heare  
 His utter foes?

Then once more pray:  
 Down with thy knees, up with thy voice.  
 Seek pardon first, and God will say,  
*Glad heart rejoyce.*

## 106. Divinitie

**A**S men, for fear the starres should sleep and  
 nod,  
 And trip at night, have spheres suppli'd;  
 As if a starre were duller then a clod,  
 Which knows his way without a guide:

Just so the other heav'n they also serve,  
 Divinities transcendent skie:  
 Which with the edge of wit they cut and carve.  
 Reason triumphs, and faith lies by.

Could not that wisdom, which first broacht  
 the wine,  
 Have thicken'd it with definitions?  
 And jagg'd his seamlesse coat, had that been fine,  
 With curious questions and divisions?

But all the doctrine, which he taught and gave,  
 Was cleare as heav'n, from whence it came.  
 At least those beams of truth, which onely save,  
 Surpasse in brightnesse any flame.

*Love God, and love your neighbour. Watch and pray.*

*Do as ye would be done unto.*

O dark instructions; ev'n as dark as day!  
 Who can these Gordian knots undo?

But he doth bid us take his blood for wine.  
 Bid what he please; yet I am sure,  
 To take and taste what he doth there designe,  
 Is all that saves, and not obscure.

Then burn thy Epicycles, foolish man;  
 Break all thy spheres, and save thy head.  
 Faith needs no staffe of flesh, but stoutly can  
 To heav'n alone both go, and leade.

107. Ephes. 4. 30

*Grieve not the Holy Spirit, &c.*

AND art thou grieved, sweet and sacred  
 Dove,

When I am sowre,  
 And crosse thy love?

Grieved for me? the God of strength and power  
 Griev'd for a worm, which when I tread,  
 I passe away and leave it dead?

Then weep mine eyes, the God of love doth  
grieve :

    Weep foolish heart,

    And weeping live :

For death is drie as dust. Yet if ye part,  
End as the night, whose sable hue  
Your sinnes expresse ; melt into dew.

When sawcie mirth shall knock or call at  
doore,

    Cry out, Get hence,

    Or cry no more.

Almightie God doth grieve, he puts on sense :  
I sinne not to my grief alone,  
But to my Gods too ; he doth grone.

Oh take thy lute, and tune it to a strain,  
Which may with thee  
All day complain.

There can no discord but in ceasing be.  
Marbles can weep ; and surely strings  
More bowels have, then such hard things.

Lord, I adjudge my self to tears and grief,  
Ev'n endlesse tears  
Without relief.

If a cleare spring for me no time forbears,  
But runnes, although I be not drie ;  
I am no Crystall, what shall I ?

Yet if I wail not still, since still to wail  
 Nature denies ;  
 And flesh would fail,  
 If my deserts were masters of mine eyes :  
 Lord, pardon, for thy sonne makes good  
 My want of tears with store of bloud.

## 108. The Familie

WHAT doth this noise of thoughts within  
 my heart

As if they had a part ?

What do these loud complaints and puling fears,  
 As if there were no rule or eares ?

But, Lord, the house and familie are thine,  
 Though some of them repine.

Turn out these wranglers, which defile thy seat :  
 For where thou dwellest all is neat.

First Peace and Silence all disputes controll,  
 Then Order plaies the soul ;  
 And giving all things their set forms and houres,  
 Makes of wilde woods sweet walks and  
 bowres.

Humble Obedience neare the doore doth stand,  
 Expecting a command :  
 Then whom in waiting nothing seems more slow,  
 Nothing more quick when she doth go.

Joyes oft are there, and griefs as oft as joyes ;  
 But griefs without a noise :  
 Yet speak they louder, then distemper'd fears.  
 What is so shrill as silent tears ?

This is thy house, with these it doth abound :  
 And where these are not found,  
 Perhaps thou com'st sometimes, and for a day ;  
 But not to make a constant stay.

### 109. The Size

**C**ONTENT thee, greedie heart.  
 Modest and moderate joyes to those, that have  
 Title to more hereafter when they part,  
 Are passing brave.

Let th' upper springs into the low  
 Descend and fall, and thou dost flow.

What though some have a fraught  
 Of cloves and nutmegs, and in cinamon sail ;  
 If thou hast wherewithall to spice a draught,  
 When griefs prevail ;

And for the future time art heir  
 To th' Isle of spices ? Is't not fair ?

To be in both worlds full  
 Is more then God was, who was hungrie here.  
 Wouldst thou his laws of fasting disanull ?

Enact good cheer ?  
 Lay out thy joy, yet hope to save it ?  
 Wouldst thou both eat thy cake, and have it ?



Great joyes are all at once ;  
 But little do reserve themselves for more :  
 Those have their hopes ; these what they have  
     renounce,  
     And live on score :  
 Those are at home ; these journey still,  
 And meet the rest on Sions hill.

Thy Saviour sentenc'd joy,  
 And in the flesh condemn'd it as unfit,  
 At least in lump : for such doth oft destroy ;  
     Whereas a bit  
 Doth tice us on to hopes of more,  
 And for the present health restore.

A Christians state and case  
 Is not a corpulent, but a thinne and spare,  
 Yet active strength : whose long and bonie face  
     Content and care  
 Do seem to equally divide,  
 Like a pretender, not a bride.

Wherefore sit down, good heart ;  
 Grasp not at much, for fear thou locest all.  
 If comforts fell according to desert,<sup>1</sup>  
 They would great frosts and snows destroy :  
 For we should count, Since the last joy.

<sup>1</sup> A line is evidently missing here in the printed edition as well as B. (the poem is not in W.). Dr. Grosart ("Fuller Worthies" Edition) supplies it as follows:—"At all times fall." Mr. Ernest Rhys ("The Canterbury Poets") suggests, "Did always fall."

Then close again the seam,  
 Which thou hast open'd : do not spread thy robe  
 In hope of great things. Call to minde thy dream,  
     An earthly globe,  
 On whose meridian was engraven,  
*These seas are tears, and heav'n the haven.*

## 110. Artillerie

AS I one ev'ning sat before my cell,  
 Me thoughts a starre did shoot into my lap.  
 I rose, and shook my clothes, as knowing well,  
 That from small fires comes oft not small mishap.  
     When suddenly I heard one say,  
     *Do as thou usest, disobey,*  
     *Expell good motions from thy breast,*  
*Which have the face of fire, but end in rest.*

I, who had heard of musick in the spheres,  
 But not of speech in starres, began to muse :  
 But turning to my God, whose ministers  
 The starres and all things are ; If I refuse,  
     Dread Lord, said I, so oft my good ;  
     Then I refuse not ev'n with bloud  
     To wash away my stubborn thought :  
 For I will do, or suffer what I ought.

But I have also starres and shooters too,  
 Born where thy servants both artilleries use.  
 My tears and prayers night and day do woove,  
 And work up to thee ; yet thou dost refuse.

Not, but I am (I must say still)  
 Much more oblig'd to do thy will,  
 Then thou to grant mine : but because  
 Thy promise now hath ev'n set thee thy laws.

Then we are shooters both, and thou dost deigne  
 To enter combate with us, and contest  
 With thine own clay. But I would parley fain :  
 Shunne not my arrows, and behold my breast.

Yet if thou shunnest, I am thine :

I must be so, if I am mine.

There is no articing with thee :

I am but finite, yet thine infinitely.

### III. Church-rents and<sup>1</sup> schismes

**B**RAVE rose, (alas!) where art thou? in  
 the chair

Where thou didst lately so triumph and shine,  
 A worm doth sit, whose many feet and hair  
 Are the more foul, the more thou wert divine.  
 This, this hath done it, this did bite the root  
 And bottome of the leaves : which when the  
 winde

Did once perceive, it blew them under foot,  
 Where rude unhallow'd steps do crush and  
 grinde

Their beauteous glories. Onely shreds of  
 thee,

And those all bitten, in thy chair I see.

<sup>1</sup> Or.—B.

Why doth my Mother blush? is she the rose,  
 And shows it so? Indeed Christs precious bloud  
 Gave you a colour once; which when your foes  
 Thought to let out, the bleeding did you good,  
 And made you look much fresher then before.  
 But when debates and fretting jealousies  
 Did worm and work within you more and more,  
 Your colour faded, and calamities  
     Turned your ruddie into pale and bleak:  
 Your health and beautie both began to break.

Then did your sev'rall parts unloose and start:  
 Which when your neighbours saw, like a north-  
     winde,  
 They rushed in, and cast them in the dirt  
 Where Pagans tread. O Mother deare and  
     kinde,  
 Where shall I get me eyes enough to weep,  
 As many eyes as starres? since it is night,  
 And much of Asia and Europe fast asleep,  
 And ev'n all Africk; would at least I might  
     With these two poore ones lick up all the  
     dew,  
 Which falls by night, and poure it out for  
     you!

## 112. Justice

O DREADFULL Justice, what a fright  
 and terrour  
     Wast thou of old,  
     When sinne and errour

Did show and shape thy looks to me,  
And through their glasse discolour  
thee!

He that did but look up, was proud and bold.

The dishes of thy ballance seem'd to gape,  
Like two great pits;  
The beam and scape<sup>1</sup>  
Did like some tort'ring<sup>2</sup> engine  
show:  
Thy hand above did burn and glow,  
Danting the stoutest hearts, the proudest wits.

But now that Christs pure veil presents the  
sight,

I see no fears:  
Thy hand is white,  
Thy scales like buckets, which attend  
And interchangeably descend,  
Lifting to heaven from this well of tears.

For where before thou still didst call on me,  
Now I still touch  
And harp on thee.  
Gods promises have made thee mine;  
Why should I justice now decline?  
Against me there is none, but for me much.

<sup>1</sup> *Scape*, i. e. the shaft or upright of the balance, the *beam* being the cross piece from which the *dishes* hang.

<sup>2</sup> Torturing. — B. In some modern editions wrongly printed "tottering."

113. The Pilgrimage<sup>1</sup>

I TRAVELL'D on, seeing the hill, where lay  
 My expectation.

A long it was and weary way.  
 The gloomy cave of Desperation  
 I left on th' one, and on the other side  
 The rock of Pride.

And so I came to phansies meadow strow'd  
 With many a flower :  
 Fain would I here have made abode,  
 But I was quicken'd by my houre.  
 So to cares cops I came, and there got through  
 With much ado.

That led me to the wilde of passion, which  
 Some call the wold ;  
 A wasted place, but sometimes rich.  
 Here I was robb'd of all my gold,  
 Save one good Angell, which a friend had ti'd  
 Close to my side.

<sup>1</sup> Of this poem Wilmott writes in the Introduction to his edition of Herbert, p. xxv. : "Written, probably, before Bunyan was born—certainly while he was an infant, it contains all the Progress of the Pilgrim in outline. We are shown the Gloomy Cave of Desperation, the Rock of Pride, the Mead of Fancy, the Copse of Care, the Wild Heath where the Traveller is robbed of his Gold, and the Gladsome Hill that promises a fair prospect, but only yields a lake of brackish water on the top. Such a composition would scarcely escape the notice of that Spenser of the people who afterwards gave breadth and animation and figures to the scene."



Then will I trust, said I, in him alone.  
 Nay, ev'n to trust in him, was also his :  
 We must confesse, that nothing is our own.  
 Then I confesse that he my succour is :

But to have nought is ours, not to confesse  
 That we have nought. I stood amaz'd at  
 this,  
 Much troubled, till I heard a friend expresse,  
 That all things were more ours by being his.  
 What Adam had, and forfeited for all,  
 Christ keepeth now, who cannot fail or fall.

### 115. Complaining

**D**O not beguile my heart,  
 Because thou art  
 My power and wisdom. Put me not to shame,  
 Because I am  
 Thy clay that weeps, thy dust that calls.

Thou art the Lord of glorie ;  
 The deed and storie  
 Are both thy due : but I a silly flie,  
 That live or die  
 According as the weather falls.

Art thou all justice, Lord ?  
 Shows not thy word  
 More attributes ? Am I all throat or eye,  
 To weep or crie ?  
 Have I no parts but those of grief ?



Let not thy wrathfull power  
 Afflict my houre,  
 My inch of life : or let thy gracious power  
 Contract my houre,  
 That I may climbe and finde relief.

## 116. The Discharge

**B**USIE enquiring heart, what wouldst thou  
 know?

Why dost thou prie,  
 And turn, and leer, and with a licorous eye  
 Look high and low ;  
 And in thy lookings stretch and grow ?

Hast thou not made thy counts, and summ'd up  
 all?

Did not thy heart  
 Give up the whole, and with the whole depart ?  
 Let what will fall :  
 That which is past who can recall ?

Thy life is Gods, thy time to come is gone,  
 And is his right.

He is thy night at noon : he is at night  
 Thy noon alone.

The crop is his, for he hath sown.

And well it was for thee, when this befell,  
 That God did make

Thy businesse his, and in thy life partake :  
 For thou canst tell,

If it be his once, all is well.



God chains the dog till night : wilt loose the  
chain,

And wake thy sorrow ?

Wilt thou forestall it, and now grieve to morrow,

And then again

Greive over freshly all thy pain ?

Either grief will not come : or if it must,

Do not forecast.

And while it cometh, it is almost past.

Away distrust :

My God hath promis'd, he is just.

## 117. Praise

**K**ING of Glorie, King of Peace,

I will love thee :

And that love may never cease,

I will move thee.

Thou hast granted my request,

Thou hast heard me :

Thou didst note my working breast,

Thou hast spar'd me.

Wherefore with my utmost art

I will sing thee,

And the cream of all my heart

I will bring thee.

Though my sinnes against me cried,

Thou didst cleare me ;

And alone, when they replied,

Thou didst heare me.

Sev'n whole dayes, not one in seven,  
 I will praise thee.  
 In my heart, though not in heaven,  
 I can raise thee.

Thou grew'st soft and moist with tears,  
 Thou relentedst :  
 And when Justice call'd for fears,  
 Thou dissentedst.

Small it is, in this poore sort  
 To enroll thee :  
 Ev'n eternitie is too short  
 To extoll thee.

### 118. An Offering

COME, bring thy gift. If blessings were as  
 slow

As mens returns, what would become of fools ?  
 What hast thou there ? a heart ? but is it pure ?  
 Search well and see ; for hearts have many  
 holes.

Yet one pure heart is nothing to bestow :  
 In Christ two natures met to be thy cure.

O that within us hearts had propagation,  
 Since many gifts do challenge many hearts !  
 Yet one, if good, may title to a number ;  
 And single things grow fruitfull by deserts.

In publick judgements one may be a nation,  
And fence a plague, while others sleep and  
slumber.

But all I fear is lest thy heart displease,  
As neither good, nor one : so oft divisions  
Thy lusts have made, and not thy lusts alone ;  
Thy passions also have their set partitions.  
These parcell out thy heart : recover these,  
And thou mayst offer many gifts in one.

There is a balsome, or indeed a bloud,  
Dropping from heav'n, which doth both cleanse  
and close  
All sorts of wounds ; of such strange force it is.  
Seek out this All-heal, and seek no repose,  
Untill thou finde and use it to thy good :  
Then bring thy gift ; and let thy hymne be this ;

Since my sadnesse  
Into gladnesse  
Lord thou dost convert,  
O accept  
What thou hast kept,  
As thy due desert.

Had I many,  
Had I any,  
(For this heart is none)  
All were thine  
And none of mine :  
Surely thine alone.

Yet thy favour  
 May give savour  
 To this poore oblation ;  
 And it raise  
 To be thy praise,  
 And be my salvation.

### 119. Longing

WITH sick and famisht eyes,  
 With doubling knees and weary bones,  
 To thee my cries,  
 To thee my grones,  
 To thee my sighs, my tears ascend :  
 No end ?

My throat, my soul is hoarse ;  
 My heart is wither'd like a ground  
 Which thou dost curse.  
 My thoughts turn round,  
 And make me giddie ; Lord, I fall,  
 Yet call.

From thee all pitie flows.  
 Mothers are kinde, because thou art,  
 And dost dispose  
 To them a part :  
 Their infants, them ; and they suck thee  
 More free.

Bowels of pitie, heare !  
 Lord of my soul, love of my minde,  
     Bow down thine eare !  
     Let not the winde  
 Scatter my words, and in the same  
     Thy name !

Look on my sorrows round !  
 Mark well my furnace ! O what flames,  
     What heats abound !  
     What griefs, what shames !  
 Consider, Lord ; Lord, bow thine eare,  
     And heare !

Lord Jesu, thou didst bow  
 Thy dying head upon the tree :  
     O be not now  
     More dead to me !  
 Lord heare ! *Shall he that made the care,*  
     *Not heare ?*<sup>1</sup>

Behold, thy dust doth stirre,  
 It moves, it creeps, it aims at thee :  
     Wilt thou deferre  
     To succour me,  
 Thy pile of dust, wherein each crumme  
     Sayes, Come ?

To thee help appertains.  
 Hast thou left all things to their course,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xciv. 9.

And laid the reins  
 Upon the horse?  
 Is all lockt? hath a sinners plea  
 No key?

Indeed the world's thy book,  
 Where all things have their lease assign'd:  
 Yet a meek look  
 Hath interlin'd.  
 Thy board is full, yet humble guests  
 Finde nests.

Thou tarriest, while I die,  
 And fall to nothing: thou dost reigne,  
 And rule on high,  
 While I remain  
 In bitter grief: yet am I stil'd  
 Thy childe.

Lord, didst thou leave thy throne,  
 Not to relieve? how can it be,  
 That thou art grown  
 Thus hard to me?  
 Were sinne alive, good cause there were  
 To bear.

But now both sinne is dead,  
 And all thy promises live and bide.  
 That wants his head;  
 These speak and chide,  
 And in thy bosome poure my tears,  
 As theirs.



Lord JESU, heare my heart,  
 Which hath been broken now so long,  
     That ev'ry part  
     Hath got a tongue !  
 Thy beggars grow ; rid them away  
     To day.

My love, my sweetnesse, heare !  
 By these thy feet, at which my heart  
     Lies all the yeare,  
     Pluck out thy dart,  
 And heal my troubled breast which cryes,  
     Which dyes.

## 120. The Bag

**A**WAY despair ; my gracious Lord doth  
 heare.

Though windes and waves assault my keel,  
 He doth preserve it : he doth steer,  
 Ev'n when the boat seems most to reel.  
 Storms are the triumph of his art :  
 Well may he close his eyes, but not his heart.

Hast thou not heard, that my Lord JESUS di'd ?  
 Then let me tell thee a strange storie.  
 The God of power, as he did ride  
 In his majestick robes of glorie,  
 Resolv'd to light ; and so one day  
 He did descend, undressing all the way.

The starres his tire of light and rings obtain'd,  
 The cloud his bow, the fire his spear,  
 The sky his azure mantle gain'd.  
 And when they ask'd, what he would wear ;  
 He smil'd and said as he did go,  
 He had new clothes a making here below.

When he was come, as travellers are wont,  
 He did repair unto an inne.  
 Both then, and after, many a brunt  
 He did endure to cancell sinne :  
 And having giv'n the rest before,  
 Here he gave up his life to pay our score.

But as he was returning, there came one  
 That ran upon him with a spear.  
 He, who came hither all alone,  
 Bringing nor man, nor arms, nor fear,  
 Receiv'd the blow upon his side,  
 And straight he turn'd, and to his brethren cry'd,

If ye have anything to send or write,  
 (I have no bag, but here is room)  
 Unto my fathers hands and sight  
 (Beleeve me) it shall safely come.  
 That I shall minde, what you impart ;  
 Look, you may put it very neare my heart.

Or if hereafter any of my friends  
 Will use me in this kinde, the doore  
 Shall still be open ; what he sends  
 I will present, and somewhat more,  
 Not to his hurt. Sighs will convey  
 Any thing to me. Hearn despair, away.

## 121. The Jews

POORE nation, whose sweet sap, and  
 juice  
 Our cyens<sup>1</sup> have purloin'd, and left you drie :  
 Whose streams we got by the Apostles sluce,  
 And use in baptisme, while ye pine and die :  
 Who by not keeping once, became a debter ;  
 And now by keeping lose the letter :

Oh that my prayers ! mine, alas !  
 Oh that some Angel might a trumpet sound ;  
 At which the Church falling upon her face  
 Should crie so loud, untill the trump were  
 drown'd,  
 And by that crie of her deare Lord obtain,  
 That your sweet sap might come again !

122. The Collar<sup>2</sup>

I STRUCK the board, and cry'd, No more.  
 I will abroad.  
 What ? shall I ever sigh and pine ?  
 My lines and life are free ; free as the rode,  
 Loose as the winde, as large as store.  
 Shall I be still in suit ?  
 Have I no harvest but a thorn

<sup>1</sup> Cyens, *i.e.* scions.

<sup>2</sup> The title probably means " God's Restraint " ; cf. MacDonald's *England's Antiphon*, p. 179.

To let me bloud, and not restore  
 What I have lost with cordiall fruit?  
     Sure there was wine  
     Before my sighs did drie it: there was corn  
     Before my tears did drown it.  
 Is the yeare onely lost to me?  
     Have I no bayes to crown it?  
 No flowers, no garlands gay? all blasted?  
     All wasted?  
 Not so, my heart: but there is fruit,  
     And thou hast hands.  
     Recover all thy sigh-blown age  
 On double pleasures: leave thy cold dispute  
 Of what is fit, and not forsake thy cage,  
     Thy rope of sands,  
 Which pettie thoughts have made, and made to  
     thee  
 Good cable, to enforce and draw,  
     And be thy law,  
 While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.  
     Away; take heed:  
     I will abroad.  
 Call in thy deaths head there: tie up thy fears.  
     He that forbears  
     To suit and serve his need,  
     Deserves his load.  
 But as I rav'd and grew more fierce and wilde  
     At every word,  
 Me thoughts I heard one calling, *Childe*:  
     And I reply'd, *My Lord*.

## 123. The Glimpse

**W**HITHER away delight?  
 Thou cam'st but now; wilt thou so soon depart,  
 And give me up to night?  
 For many weeks of lingering pain and smart  
 But one half houre of comfort for my heart?

Me thinks delight should have  
 More skill in musick, and keep better time.  
 Wert thou a winde or wave,  
 They quickly go and come with lesser crime:  
 Flowers look about, and die not in their prime.

Thy short abode and stay  
 Feeds not, but addes to the desire of meat.  
 Lime begg'd of old (they say)  
 A neighbour spring to cool his inward heat;  
 Which by the springs accesse grew much more  
 great.

In hope of thee my heart  
 Pickt here and there a crumme, and would not  
 die;  
 But constant to his part  
 When as my fears foretold this, did replie,  
 A slender thread a gentle guest will tie.

Yet if the heart that wept  
 Must let thee go, return when it doth knock.  
 Although thy heap be kept

For future times, the droppings of the stock  
May oft break forth, and never break the lock.

If I have more to spinne,  
The wheel shall go, so that thy stay be short.  
Thou knowst how grief and sinne  
Disturb the work. O make me not their sport,  
Who by thy coming may be made a court!

#### 124. Assurance

**O** SPITEFULL bitter thought!  
Bitterly spitefull thought! Couldst thou invent  
So high a torture? Is such poyson bought?  
Doubtlesse, but in the way of punishment,  
When wit contrives to meet with thee,  
No such rank poyson can there be.

Thou said'st but even now,  
That all was not so fair, as I conceiv'd,  
Betwixt my God and me; that I allow  
And coin large hopes; but, that I was deceiv'd:  
Either the league was broke, or neare it;  
And, that I had great cause to fear it.

And what to this? what more  
Could poyson, if it had a tongue, expresse?  
What is thy aim? wouldst thou unlock the doore  
To cold despairs, and gnawing pensiveness?

Wouldst thou raise devils? I see, I know,  
I writ thy purpose long ago.

But I will to my Father,  
Who heard thee say it. O most gracious Lord,  
If all the hope and comfort that I gather,  
Were from my self, I had not half a word,  
Not half a letter to oppose  
What is objected by my foes.

But thou art my desert :  
And in this league, which now my foes invade,  
Thou art not onely to perform thy part,  
But also mine ; as when the league was made  
Thou didst at once thy self indite,  
And hold my hand, while I did write.

Wherefore if thou canst fail,  
Then can thy truth and I : but while rocks stand,  
And rivers stirre, thou canst not shrink or quail :  
Yea, when both rocks and all things shall  
disband,  
Then shalt thou be my rock and tower,  
And make their ruine praise thy power.

Now foolish thought go on,  
Spin out thy thread, and make thereof a coat  
To hide thy shame : for thou hast cast a bone  
Which bounds on thee, and will not down thy  
throat :  
What for it self love once began,  
Now love and truth will end in man.

## 125. The Call

COME, my Way, my Truth, my Life :  
 Such a Way, as gives us breath :  
 Such a Truth, as ends all strife :  
 And such a Life, as killeth death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength :  
 Such a Light, as shows a feast :  
 Such a Feast, as mends in length :  
 Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart :  
 Such a Joy, as none can move :  
 Such a Love, as none can part :  
 Such a Heart, as joyes in love.

## 126. Claspings of hands

LORD, thou art mine, and I am thine,  
 If mine I am : and thine much more,  
 Then I or ought, or can be mine.  
 Yet to be thine, doth me restore ;  
 So that again I now am mine,  
 And with advantage mine the more.  
 Since this being mine, brings with it thine,  
 And thou with me dost thee restore.  
 If I without thee would be mine,  
 I neither should be mine nor thine.



Lord, I am thine, and thou art mine :  
 So mine thou art, that something more  
 I may presume thee mine, then thine.  
 For thou didst suffer to restore  
 Not thee, but me, and to be mine :  
 And with advantage mine the more,  
 Since thou in death wast none of thine,  
 Yet then as mine didst me restore.

O be mine still ! still make me thine !  
 Or rather make no Thine and Mine !

## 127. Praise

**L**ORD, I will mean and speak thy praise,  
 Thy praise alone.

My busie heart shall spin it all my dayes :  
 And when it stops for want of store,  
 Then will I wring it with a sigh or grone,  
 That thou mayst yet have more.

When thou dost favour any action,  
 It runnes, it flies :  
 All things concurre to give it a perfection.  
 That which had but two legs before,  
 When thou dost blesse, hath twelve : one wheel  
 doth rise  
 To twentie then, or more.

But when thou dost on businesse blow,  
 It hangs, it clogs :  
 Not all the teams of Albion in a row  
 Can hale or draw it out of doore.

Legs are but stumps, and Pharaohs wheels but  
 logs,  
 And struggling hinders more.

Thousands of things do thee employ  
 In ruling all  
 This spacious globe : Angels must have their joy,  
 Devils their rodd, the sea his shore,  
 The windes their stint : and yet when I did call,  
 Thou heardst my call, and more.

I have not lost one single tear :  
 But when mine eyes  
 Did weep to heav'n, they found a bottle there  
 (As we have boxes for the poore)  
 Readie to take them in ; yet of a size  
 That would contain much more.

But after thou hadst slipt a drop  
 From thy right eye,  
 (Which there did hang like streamers neare the  
 top  
 Of some fair church to show the sore  
 And bloudie battell which thou once didst trie)  
 The glasse was full and more.

Wherefore I sing. Yet since my heart,  
 Though press'd, runnes thin ;  
 O that I might some other hearts convert,  
 And so take up at use good store :  
 That to thy chests there might be coming in  
 Both all my praise, and more !

## 128. Josephs coat

WOUNDED I sing, tormented I indite,  
 Thrown down I fall into a bed, and rest :  
 Sorrow hath chang'd its note : such is his will,  
 Who changeth all things, as him pleaseth best.

For well he knows, if but one grief and smart  
 Among my many had his full career,  
 Sure it would carrie with it ev'n my heart,  
 And both would runne untill they found a biere  
 To fetch the bodie ; both being due to grief.  
 But he hath spoil'd the race ; and giv'n to anguish  
 One of Joyes coats, ticing it with relief  
 To linger in me, and together languish.

I live to shew his power, who once did bring  
 My *joyes* to *weep*, and now my *griefs* to *sing*.

## 129. The Pulley

WHEN God at first made man,  
 Having a glasse of blessings standing by ;  
 Let us (said he) poure on him all we can :  
 Let the worlds riches, which dispersed lie,  
 Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way ;  
 Then beautie flow'd, then wisdom, honour,  
 pleasure :  
 When almost all was out, God made a stay,  
 Perceiving that alone of all his treasure  
 Rest in the bottome lay.

For if I should (said he)  
 Bestow this jewell also on my creature,  
 He would adore my gifts in stead of me,  
 And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature.  
 So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,  
 But keep them with repining restlesnesse :  
 Let him be rich and wearie, that at least,  
 If goodnesse leade him not, yet wearinesse  
 May tosse him to my breast.

### 130. The Priesthood

**B**LEST Order, which in power dost so exceli,  
 That with th' one hand thou liftest to the  
 sky,  
 And with the other throwest down to hell  
 In thy just censures ; fain would I draw nigh,  
 Fain put thee on, exchanging my lay-sword  
 For that of th' holy word.<sup>1</sup>

But thou art fire, sacred and hallow'd fire ;  
 And I but earth and clay : should I presume  
 To wear thy habit, the severe attire  
 My slender compositions might consume.  
 I am both foul and brittle ; much unfit  
 To deal in holy Writ.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Walton's Life (above, p. lxxi), where he describes how, when he was made Rector of Bemerton and ordained priest, Herbert "changed his sword and silk clothes into a canonical coat."

Yet have I often seen, by cunning hand  
 And force of fire, what curious things are made  
 Of wretched earth. Where once I scorn'd to  
 stand,

That earth is fitted by the fire and trade  
 Of skilfull artists, for the boards of those  
 Who make the bravest shows.

But since those great ones, be they ne're so great,  
 Come from the earth, from whence those vessels  
 come ;

So that at once both feeder, dish, and meat  
 Have one beginning and one finall summe :  
 I do not greatly wonder at the sight,  
 If earth in earth delight.

But th' holy men of God such vessels are,  
 As serve him up, who all the world commands :  
 When God vouchsafeth to become our fare,  
 Their hands conuey him, who conveys their  
 hands.

O what pure things, most pure must those  
 things be,  
 Who bring my God to me !

Wherefore I dare not, I, put forth my hand  
 To hold the Ark, although it seem to shake <sup>1</sup>  
 Through th' old sinnes and new doctrines of  
 our land.

Onely, since God doth often vessels make  
 Of lowly matter for high uses meet,  
 I throw me at his feet.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2 Sam. vi. 6.









A narrow cupboard for my griefs and doubts,  
 Which want provision in the midst of all.  
 Verses, ye are too fine a thing, too wise  
 For my rough sorrows: cease, be dumbe and  
 mute,  
 Give up your feet and running to mine eyes,  
 And keep your measures for some lovers lute,  
 Whose grief allows him musick and a ryme:  
 For mine excludes both measure, tune, and time.  
 Alas, my God!

### 133. The Crosse

**W**HAT is this strange and uncouth  
 thing?  
 To make me sigh, and seek, and faint, and die,  
 Untill I had some place, where I might sing,  
 And serve thee; and not onely I,  
 But all my wealth, and familie might combine  
 To set thy honour up, as our designe.

And then when after much delay,  
 Much wrastling, many a combate, this deare end,  
 So much desir'd, is giv'n, to take away  
 My power to serve thee; to unbend  
 All my abilities, my designes confound,  
 And lay my threatnings bleeding on the ground.

One ague dwelleth in my bones,  
 Another in my soul (the memorie  
 What I would do for thee, if once my grones  
 Could be allow'd for harmonie).

I am in all a weak disabled thing,  
 Save in the sight thereof, where strength doth  
 sting.

Besides, things sort not to my will,  
 Ev'n when my will doth studie thy renown :  
 Thou turnest th' edge of all things on me still,  
 Taking me up to throw me down :  
 So that, ev'n when my hopes seem to be sped,  
 I am to grief alive, to them as dead.

To have my aim, and yet to be  
 Farther from it then when I bent my bow ;  
 To make my hopes my torture, and the fee  
 Of all my woes another wo,  
 Is in the midst of delicates to need,  
 And ev'n in Paradise to be a weed.

Ah my deare Father, ease my smart !  
 These contrarieties crush me : these crosse  
 actions  
 Doe winde a rope about, and cut my heart :  
 And yet since these thy contradictions  
 Are properly a crosse felt by thy sonne,  
 With but foure words, my words, *Thy will be done.*

### 134. The Flower

**H**OW fresh, O Lord, how sweet and  
 clean  
 Are thy returns ! ev'n as the flowers in spring ;  
 To which, besides their own demean,  
 The late-past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.

Grief melts away  
 Like snow in May,  
 As if there were no such cold thing.

Who would have thought my shrivel'd  
 heart  
 Could have recover'd greenesse? It was gone  
 Quite under ground; as flowers depart  
 To see their mother-root, when they have blown;  
 Where they together  
 All the hard weather,  
 Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

These are thy wonders, Lord of power,  
 Killing and quickning, bringing down to hell  
 And up to heaven in an houre;  
 Making a chiming of a passing-bell.  
 We say amisse,  
 This or that is:  
 Thy word is all, if we could spell.

O that I once past changing were,  
 Fast in thy Paradise, where no flower can  
 wither!  
 Many a spring I shoot up fair,  
 Off'ring at heav'n, growing and groning thither:  
 Nor doth my flower  
 Want a spring-showre,  
 My sinnes and I joining together:

But while I grow in a straight line,  
 Still upwards bent, as if heav'n were mine own,





## 137. A true Hymne

MY joy, my life, my crown!  
 My heart was meaning all the day,  
 Somewhat it fain would say:  
 And still it runneth mutt'ring up and down  
 With onely this, *My joy, my life, my crown.*

Yet slight not these few words:  
 If truly said, they may take part  
 Among the best in art.  
 The finenesse which a hymne or psalme affords,  
 Is, when the soul unto the lines accords.

He who craves all the minde,  
 And all the soul, and strength, and time,  
 If the words onely ryme,  
 Justly complains, that somewhat is behinde  
 To make his verse, or write a hymne in kinde.

Whereas if th' heart be moved,  
 Although the verse be somewhat scant,  
 God doth supplie the want.  
 As when th' heart sayes (sighing to be approved)  
 O, *could I love!* and stops: God writeth, *Loved.*

## 138. The Answer

MY comforts drop and melt away like snow:  
 I shake my head, and all the thoughts  
 and ends,  
 Which my fierce youth did bandie, fall and flow  
 Like leaves about me; or like summer friends,

Flyes of estates and sunne-shine.<sup>1</sup> But to all,  
 Who think me eager, hot, and undertaking,  
 But in my prosecutions slack and small ;  
 As a young exhalation, newly waking,  
 Scorns his first bed of dirt, and means the sky ;  
 But cooling by the way, grows pursie and slow,  
 And setling to a cloud, doth live and die  
 In that dark state of tears : to all, that so  
 Show me, and set me, I have one reply,  
 Which they that know the rest, know more  
 then I.

### 139. A Dialogue-Anthème

#### *Christian. Death*

*Chr.* ALAS, poore Death, where is thy  
 glorie ?

Where is thy famous force, thy ancient sting ?

*Dea.* *Alas poore mortall, void of storie,*  
*Go spell and reade how I have kill'd thy King.*

*Chr.* Poore death ! and who was hurt thereby ?  
 Thy curse being laid on him, makes thee  
 accurst.

*Dea.* *Let losers talk : yet thou shalt die ;*  
*These arms shall crush thee.* *Chr.* Spare not,  
 do thy worst.

I shall be one day better then before :  
 Thou so much worse, that thou shalt be  
 no more.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Shakespeare, *Henry VI.* Part III. Act II. sc. vi. :  
 "The common people swarm like summer flies :  
 And whither fly the gnats, but to the sun ?"

## 140. The Water-course

THOU who dost dwell and linger here  
 below,  
 Since the condition of this world is frail,  
 Where of all plants afflictions soonest grow ;  
 If troubles overtake thee, do not wail :

For who can look for lesse, that loveth {Life.  
 {Strife.

But rather turn the pipe, and waters course  
 To serve thy sinnes, and furnish thee with store  
 Of sov'raigne tears, springing from true remorse :  
 That so in purenesse thou mayst him adore,

Who gives to man, as he sees fit {Salvation.  
 {Damnation.

## 141. Self-condemnation

THOU who condemnest Jewish hate,  
 For choosing Barabbas a murderer  
 Before the Lord of glorie ;  
 Look back upon thine own estate,  
 Call home thine eye (that busie wanderer)  
 That choice may be thy storie.

He that doth love, and love amisse  
 This worlds delights before true Christian joy,



Hath made a Jewish choice :

The world an ancient murderer is ;

Thousands of souls it hath and doth destroy

With her enchanting voice.

He that hath made a sorrie wedding

Between his soul and gold, and hath preferr'd

False gain before the true,

Hath done what he condemnes in reading :

For he hath sold for money his deare Lord,

And is a Judas-Jew.

Thus we prevent the last great day,

And judge our selves. That light, which sin  
and passion

Did before dimme and choke,

When once those snuffes are ta'ne away,

Shines bright and cleare, ev'n unto condemnation,

Without excuse or cloke.

## 142. Bitter-sweet

AH my deare angrie Lord,

Since thou dost love, yet strike ;

Cast down, yet help afford ;

Sure I will do the like.

I will complain, yet praise ;

I will bewail, approve :

And all my sowre-sweet dayes

I will lament, and love.

## 143. The Glance

WHEN first thy sweet and gracious eye  
 Vouchsaf'd ev'n in the midst of youth and night  
 To look upon me, who before did lie

Weltring in sinne ;  
 I felt a sugred strange delight,  
 Passing all cordials made by any art,  
 Bedew, embalme, and overrunne my heart,  
 And take it in.

Since that time many a bitter storm  
 My soul hath felt, ev'n able to destroy,  
 Had the malicious and ill-meaning harm

His swing and sway :  
 But still thy sweet originall joy  
 Sprung from thine eye, did work within my soul,  
 And surging griefs, when they grew bold, controll,  
 And got the day.

If thy first glance so powerfull be,  
 A mirth but open'd and seal'd up again ;  
 What wonders shall we feel, when we shall see  
 Thy full-ey'd love !

When thou shalt look us out of pain,  
 And one aspect of thine spend in delight  
 More then a thousand sunnes disburse in light,  
 In heav'n above.

## 144. The 23 Psalme

THE God of love my shepherd is,  
And he that doth me feed :  
While he is mine, and I am his,  
What can I want or need ?

He leads me to the tender grasse,  
Where I both feed and rest ;  
Then to the streams that gently passe :  
In both I have the best.

Or if I stray, he doth convert  
And bring my minde in frame :  
And all this not for my desert,  
But for his holy name.

Yea, in deaths shadie black abode  
Well may I walk, not fear :  
For thou art with me ; and thy rod  
To guide, thy staffe to bear.

Nay, thou dost make me sit and dine,  
Ev'n in my enemies sight :  
My head with oyl, my cup with wine  
Runnes over day and night.

Surely thy sweet and wondrous love  
Shall measure all my dayes ;  
And as it never shall remove,  
So neither shall my praise.

## 145. Marie Magdalene

WHEN blessed Marie wip'd her Saviours  
feet,

(Whose precepts she had trampled on before)

And wore them for a jewell on her head,

Shewing his steps should be the street,

Wherein she thenceforth evermore

With pensive humbleness would live and tread :

She being stain'd her self, why did she strive  
To make him clean, who could not be defil'd ?

Why kept she not her tears for her own faults,

And not his feet ? Though we could dive

In tears like seas, our sinnes are pil'd

Deeper then they, in words, and works, and  
thoughts.

Deare soul, she knew who did vouchsafe and  
deigne

To bear her filth ; and that her sinnes did dash  
Ev'n God himself : wherefore she was not loth,

As she had brought wherewith to stain,

So to bring in wherewith to wash :

And yet in washing one, she washed both.

## 146. Aaron

HOLINESSE on the head,<sup>1</sup>  
 Light and perfections<sup>2</sup> on the breast,  
 Harmonious bells below,<sup>3</sup> raising the dead  
 To leade them unto life and rest.  
 Thus are true Aarons drest.

Profanenesse in my head,  
 Defects and darknesse in my breast,  
 A noise of passions ringing me for dead  
 Unto a place where is no rest :  
 Poore priest thus am I drest.

Onely another head  
 I have, another heart and breast,  
 Another musick, making live not dead,  
 Without whom I could have no rest :  
 In him I am well drest.

Christ is my onely head,  
 My alone onely heart and breast,  
 My onely musick, striking me ev'n dead ;  
 That to the old man I may rest,  
 And be in him new drest.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ex. xxviii. 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Light and perfections*, i.e. "Urim and Thummim"  
 (see Ex. xxviii. 30).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 33-35.

So holy in my head,  
 Perfect and light in my deare breast,  
 My doctrine tun'd by Christ, (who is not dead,  
 But lives in me while I do rest)  
 Come people ; Aaron's drest.

## 147. The Odour, 2 Cor. 2

**H**OW sweetly doth *My Master*<sup>1</sup> sound ! *My  
 Master !*

As Amber-greese leaves a rich sent  
 Unto the taster :

So do these words a sweet content,  
 An orientall fragrancie, *My Master*.

With these all day I do perfume my minde,  
 My minde ev'n thrust into them both :  
 That I might finde  
 What cordials make this curious broth,  
 This broth of smells, that feeds and fats my  
 minde.

*My Master*, shall I speak ? O that to thee  
*My servant* were a little so,  
 As flesh may be ;  
 That these two words might creep and  
 grow  
 To some degree of spicinesse to thee !

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "The Printers to the Reader," above, p. cx.

Then should the Pomander,<sup>1</sup> which was before  
 A speaking sweet, mend by reflection,  
 And tell me more :

For pardon of my imperfection  
 Would warm and work it sweeter then before

For when *My Master*, which alone is sweet,  
 And ev'n in my unworthinesse pleasing,  
 Shall call and meet,  
*My servant*, as thee not displeasing,  
 That call is but the breathing of the sweet.

This breathing would with gains by sweetning me  
 (As sweet things traffick when they  
 meet)

Return to thee.

And so this new commerce and sweet  
 Should all my life employ, and busie me.

## 148. The Foil

IF we could see below  
 The sphere of vertue, and each shining grace  
 As plainly as that above doth show ;  
 This were the better skie, the brighter place.

God hath made starres the foil  
 To set off vertues ; griefs to set off sinning :  
 Yet in this wretched world we toil,  
 As if grief were not foul, nor vertue winning.

<sup>1</sup> *Pomander*, *i.e.* a scent-ball or box containing perfumes. The word occurs again in "The Banquet" (No. 153), below, p. 226.

## 149. The Forerunners

THE harbingers<sup>1</sup> are come. See, see their  
mark ;

White is their colour, and behold my head.

But must they have my brain? must they dispart  
Those sparkling notions, which therein were  
bred?

Must dulnesse turn me to a clod?

Yet have they left me, *Thou art still my God.*

Good men ye be, to leave me my best room,  
Ev'n all my heart, and what is lodged there :  
I passe not, I, what of the rest become,  
So *Thou art still my God*, be out of fear.

He will be pleased with that dittie ;

And if I please him, I write fine and wittie.

Farewell sweet phrases, lovely metaphors.

But will ye leave me thus? when ye before

Of stews and brothels onely knew the doores,

Then did I wash you with my tears, and more,

Brought you to Church well drest and clad :

My God must have my best, ev'n all I had.

<sup>1</sup> *Harbingers*: the word is used here in its proper meaning of a messenger sent on before to prepare a lodging. Grosart quotes, as illustrating Herbert's use of it, the following from "Albumazar":—

"I have no reason, nor spare room for any,

Love's harbinger hath chalk'd upon my heart,

And with a coal writ on my brain, 'For Flavia,'

This house is wholly taken up 'For Flavia.'"



Louely enchanting language, sugar-cane,  
 Hony of roses, whither wilt thou flie ?  
 Hath some fond lover tic'd thee to thy bane ?  
 And wilt thou leave the Church, and love a stie ?  
     Fie, thou wilt soil thy broider'd coat,  
 And hurt thy self, and him that sings the note.

Let foolish lovers, if they will love dung,  
 With canvas, not with arras clothe their shame :  
 Let follie speak in her own native tongue.  
 True beautie dwells on high : ours is a flame  
     But borrow'd thence to light us thither.  
 Beautie and beauteous words should go together.

Yet if you go, I passe not ; take your way :  
 For, *Thou art still my God*, is all that ye  
 Perhaps with more embellishment can say,  
 Go birds of spring : let winter have his fee,  
     Let a bleak paleness chalk the doore,  
 So all within be livelier then before.

## 150. The Rose

**P**RESSE me not to take more pleasure  
 In this world of sugred lies,  
 And to use a larger measure  
     Then my strict, yet welcome size.

First, there is no pleasure here :  
     Colour'd griefs indeed there are,  
 Blushing woes, that look as cleare  
     As if they could beautie spare.

Or if such deceits there be,  
Such delights I meant to say ;  
There are no such things to me,  
Who have pass'd my right away.

But I will not much oppose  
Unto what you now advise :  
Onely take this gentle rose,  
And therein my answer lies.

What is fairer then a rose ?  
What is sweeter ? yet it purgeth.  
Purgings enmitie disclose,  
Enmitie forbearance urgeth.

If then all that worldlings prize  
Be contracted to a rose ;  
Sweetly there indeed it lies,  
But it biteth in the close.

So this flower doth judge and sentence  
Worldly joyes to be a scourge :  
For they all produce repentance,  
And repentance is a purge.

But I health, not physick choose :  
Onely though I you oppose,  
Say that fairly I refuse,  
For my answer is a rose.

## 151. Discipline

THROW away thy rod,  
    Throw away thy wrath :  
    O my God,  
Take the gentle path.

For my hearts desire  
Unto thine is bent :  
    I aspire  
To a full consent.

Not a word or look  
I affect to own,  
    But by book,  
And thy book alone.

Though I fail, I weep :  
Though I halt in pace,  
    Yet I creep  
To the throne of grace.

Then let wrath remove ;  
Love will do the deed :  
    For with love  
Stonie hearts will bleed.

Love is swift of foot ;  
Love's a man of warre,  
    And can shoot,  
And can hit from farre.









This on my ring,  
 This by my picture, in my book I write :  
 Whether I sing,  
 Or say, or dictate, this is my delight.

Invention rest,  
 Comparisons go play, wit use thy will :  
*Lesse then the least*  
*Of all Gods mercies*, is my posie still.

### 155. A Parodie<sup>1</sup>

SOULS joy, when thou art gone,  
 And I alone,  
 Which cannot be,  
 Because thou dost abide with me,  
 And I depend on thee ;

<sup>1</sup> The original, which Herbert here "parodies," is a love-song of Donne's. It is only in the first stanza, which runs as follows, that there is any similarity :—

Soul's joy, now I am gone,  
 And you alone—  
 Which cannot be,  
 Since I must leave myself with thee,  
 And carry thee with me—  
 Yet when unto our eyes  
 Absence denyes  
 Each other's right,  
 And makes to us a constant night,  
 When others change to light ;  
 O, give no way to grief,  
 But let relief  
 Of mutual love  
 This wonder to the vulgar prove  
 Our bodies, not we, move.

—Donne's Poems (Edit. Grosart), vol. ii. p. 235.



Yet when thou dost suppress  
The cheerfulness  
Of thy abode,  
And in my powers not stirre abroad,  
But leave me to my load :

O what a damp and shade  
Doth me invade !  
No stormie night  
Can so afflict or so affright,  
As thy eclipsed light.

Ah Lord ! do not withdraw,  
Lest want of aw  
Make Sinne appeare ;  
And when thou dost but shine lesse cleare,  
Say, that thou art not here.

And then what life I have,  
While Sinne doth rave,  
And falsly boast,  
That I may seek, but thou art lost ;  
Thou and alone thou know'st.

O what a deadly cold  
Doth me infold !  
I half beleeve,  
That Sinne says true : but while I grieve,  
Thou com'st and dost relieve.

156. The Elixer<sup>1</sup>

TEACH<sup>2</sup> me, my God and King,  
 In all things thee to see,  
 And what I do in any thing,  
 To do it as for thee :

Not<sup>3</sup> rudely, as a beast,  
 To runne into an action ;  
 But still to make thee prepossest,  
 And give it his perfection.

A man that looks on glasse,  
 On it may stay his eye ;  
 Or if he pleaseth, through it passe,  
 And then the heav'n espie.

All may of thee partake :  
 Nothing can be so mean,  
 Which with his<sup>4</sup> tincture (for thy sake)  
 Will not grow bright and clean.

<sup>1</sup> "Perfection. The Elixir."—W. (The second title having been added by Herbert himself.)

<sup>2</sup> In W. the first stanza is as follows :—

Lord, teach mee to referr  
 All things I doe to thee,  
 That I not onely may not err,  
 But allso pleasing bee.

<sup>3</sup> This stanza is wanting in W.

<sup>4</sup> The common misprint, "this" for "his," first occurs in 1656.

A servant with this clause  
 Makes drudgerie divine :  
 Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,  
 Makes that and th' action fine.

This is the famous stone  
 That turneth all to gold :  
 For that which God doth touch and own  
 Cannot for lesse be told.<sup>1</sup>

### 157. A Wreath

**A** WREATHED garland of deserved praise,  
 Of praise deserved, unto thee I give,  
 I give to thee, who knowest all my wayes,  
 My crooked winding wayes, wherein I live,  
 Wherein I die, not live : for life is straight,  
 Straight as a line, and ever tends to thee,  
 To thee, who art more farre above deceit,  
 Then deceit seems above simplicitie.  
 Give me simplicitie, that I may live,  
 So live and like, that I may know thy wayes,  
 Know them and practise them : then shall I give  
 For this poore wreath, give thee a crown of  
 praise.

<sup>1</sup> In W. this last stanza is added by Herbert himself.

## 158. Death

**D**EATH, thou wast once an uncouth hideous  
thing,

Nothing but bones,  
The sad effect of sadder grones ;  
Thy mouth was open, but thou couldst not sing.

For we consider'd thee as at some six  
Or ten yeares hence,  
After the losse of life and sense,  
Flesh being turn'd to dust, and bones to sticks.

We lookt on this side of thee, shooting short ;  
Where we did finde  
The shells of fledge souls left behinde,  
Dry dust, which sheds no tears, but may extort.

But since our Saviours death did put some bloud  
Into thy face ;  
Thou art grown fair and full of grace,  
Much in request, much sought<sup>1</sup> for, as a good.

For we do now behold thee gay and glad,  
As at dooms-day ;  
When souls shall wear their new aray,  
And all thy bones with beautie shall be clad.

Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust  
Half that we have  
Unto an honest faithfull grave ;  
Making our pillows either down, or dust.

<sup>1</sup> Long'd.—W.

## 159. Dooms-day

COME away,  
 Make no delay.  
 Summon all the dust to rise,  
 Till it stirre, and rubbe the eyes ;  
 While this member jogs the other,  
 Each one whispring, *Live you brother ?*

Come away,  
 Make this the day.  
 Dust, alas, no musick feels,  
 But thy trumpet : then it kneels,  
 As peculiar notes and strains  
 Cure Tarantulaes raging pains.

Come away,  
 O make no stay !  
 Let the graves make their confession,  
 Lest at length they plead possession :  
 Fleshes stubbornnesse may have  
 Read that lesson to the grave.

Come away,  
 Thy flock doth stray.  
 Some to windes their bodie <sup>1</sup> lend,  
 And in them may drown a friend :  
 Some in noisome vapours grow  
 To a plague and publick wo.

<sup>1</sup> Bodies.—W.

Come away,  
 Help our decay.  
 Man is out of order hurl'd,  
 Parcel'd out to all the world.  
 Lord, thy broken consort raise,  
 And the musick shall be praise.

### 160. Judgement

**A**LMIGHTIE Judge, how shall poore  
 wretches brook  
                                   Thy dreadfull look,  
 Able a heart of iron to appall,  
                                   When thou shalt call  
 For ev'ry mans peculiar book ?

What others mean to do, I know not well ;  
                                   Yet I heare <sup>1</sup> tell,  
 That some will turn thee to some leaves therein  
                                   So void of sinne,  
 That they in merit shall excell.

But I resolve, when thou shalt call for mine,  
                                   That to decline,  
 And thrust a Testament into thy hand :  
                                   Let that be scann'd.  
 There thou shalt finde my faults are thine.

<sup>1</sup> Misprinted " here " in 1674.

## 161. Heaven

O WHO will show me those delights on high ?

*Echo.* I.

Thou Echo, thou art mortall, all men know.

*Echo.* No.

Wert thou not born among the trees <sup>1</sup> and leaves ?

*Echo.* Leaves.

And are there any leaves, that <sup>2</sup> still abide ?

*Echo.* Bide.

What leaves are they ? impart the matter wholly.

*Echo.* Holy.

Are holy leaves the Echo then of blisse ?

*Echo.* Yes.

Then tell me, what is that supreme delight ?

*Echo.* Light.

Light to the minde : what shall the will enjoy ?

*Echo.* Joy.

But are there cares and businesse with the  
pleasure ?

*Echo.* Leisure.

Light, joy, and leisure ; but shall they persever ?

*Echo.* Ever.

<sup>1</sup> Woods.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Which.—W.

## 162. Love

LOVE bade me welcome : yet my soul drew  
back,

Guiltie of dust and sinne.

But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack

From my first entrance in,

Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,

If I lack'd any thing.

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here :

Love said, you shall be he.

I the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah my deare,

I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,

Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them : let my  
shame

Go where it doth deserve.

And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the  
blame?

My deare, then I will serve.

You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste mymeat:

So I did sit and eat.

*FINIS.*

*Glorie be to God on high, and on earth peace, good  
will towards men.*



## 163. The Church Militant

ALMIGHTIE Lord, who from thy glorious  
throne

Seest and rulest all things ev'n as one :  
The smallest ant or atome knows thy power,  
Known also to each minute of an hour :  
Much more do Common-weals acknowledge thee,  
And wrap their policies in thy decree,  
Complying with thy counsels, doing nought  
Which doth not meet with an eternall thought.  
But above all, thy Church and Spouse doth prove  
Not the decrees of power, but bands of love.  
Early didst thou arise to plant this vine,<sup>1</sup>  
Which might the more indeare it to be thine.  
Spices come from the East ; so did thy Spouse,  
Trimme as the light, sweet as the laden boughs  
Of *Noahs* shadie vine, chaste as the dove ;  
Prepar'd and fitted to receive thy love.<sup>2</sup>  
The course was westward, that the sunne might  
light

As well our understanding as our sight.  
Where th' Ark did rest, there *Abraham* began  
To bring the other Ark from *Canaan*.  
*Moses* pursu'd this : but King *Solomon*  
Finish'd and fixt the old religion.  
When it grew loose, the Jews did hope in vain  
By nailing Christ to fasten it again.

<sup>1</sup> Thou didst rise early for to plant this vine.—W.

<sup>2</sup> All emblems which thy darling doth improve.—W.

But to the Gentiles he bore crosse and all,  
 Rending with earthquakes the partition-wall :  
 Onely whereas the Ark in glorie shone,  
 Now with the crosse, as with a staffe, alone,  
 Religion, like a pilgrime, westward bent,  
 Knocking at all doores, ever as she went.  
 Yet as the sunne, though forward be his flight,  
 Listens behinde him, and allows<sup>1</sup> some light,  
 Till all depart :<sup>2</sup> so went the Church her way,  
 Letting, while one foot stept, the other stay  
 Among the eastern nations for a time,  
 Till both removed to the western clime.  
 To *Egypt* first she came, where they did prove  
 Wonders of anger once, but now of love.  
 The ten Commandments there did flourish more  
 Then the ten bitter plagues had done before.  
 Holy *Macarius* and great *Anthonie*  
 Made *Pharaoh Moses*, changing th' historie.  
*Goshen* was darknesse, *Egypt* full of lights,  
*Nilus* for monsters brought forth Israelites.  
 Such power hath mightie Baptisme to produce  
 For things misshapen, things of highest use.  
*How deare to me, O God, thy counsels are !*<sup>3</sup>  
*Who may with thee compare ?*  
 Religion thence fled into *Greece*, where arts<sup>4</sup>  
 Gave her the highest place in all mens hearts.  
 Learning was pos'd, Philosophie was set,  
 Sophisters taken in a fishers net.  
*Plato* and *Aristotle* were at a losse,  
 And wheel'd about again to spell *Christ-Crosse*.

<sup>1</sup> Gives them.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Be gone.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ps. cxxxix. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Thence into Greece she fled, where curious arts.—W.

Prayers chas'd syllogismes into their den,  
 And *Ergo* was transform'd into *Amen*.  
 Though *Greece* took horse as soon as *Egypt* did,  
 And *Rome* as both ; yet *Egypt* faster rid,  
 And spent<sup>1</sup> her period and prefixed time  
 Before the other. *Greece* being past her prime,  
 Religion went to *Rome*, subduing those,  
 Who, that they might subdue, made all their foes.<sup>2</sup>  
 The Warrior his deere skarres no more resounds,  
 But seems to yeeld Christ hath<sup>3</sup> the greater  
 wounds,  
 Wounds willingly endur'd to work his blisse,  
 Who by an ambush lost his Paradise.  
 The great heart stoops, and taketh from the  
 dust  
 A sad repentance, not the spoils of lust :  
 Quitting his spear, lest it should pierce again  
 Him in his members, who for him was slain.  
 The Shepherds hook grew to a scepter here,  
 Giving new names and numbers to the yeare.  
 But th' Empire dwelt in *Greece*, to comfort them  
 Who were cut short in *Alexanders* stemme.  
 In both of these Prowesse and Arts did tame  
 And tune<sup>4</sup> mens hearts against the Gospel came ;  
 Which using, and not fearing skill in th' one,  
 Or strength in th' other, did erect her throne.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Spending.—W.

<sup>2</sup> In W. these last three lines are as follows :—

Before the other two were in their prime ;  
 From *Greece* to *Rome* she went, subduing those  
 Who had subdued all the world for foes.

<sup>3</sup> Had.—W.

<sup>4</sup> Cleanse.—W.

<sup>5</sup> Took possession.—W.

Many a rent and struggling th' Empire knew,  
 (As dying things are wont) untill it flew  
 At length to *Germanie*, still westward bending,  
 And there the Churches festivall attending :  
 That as before Empire and Arts made way,  
 (For no lesse Harbingers would serve then  
 they)

So they might still, and point us out the place  
 Where first the Church should raise her down-  
 cast face.

Strength levels grounds, Art makes a garden  
 there ;

Then showres Religion, and makes all to bear.

*Spain* in the Empire shar'd with *Germanie*,

But *England* in the higher victorie :

Giving the Church a crown to keep her state,

And not go lesse then she had done of late.

*Constantines* British line meant this of old,

And did this mysterie wrap up and fold

Within a sheet of paper, which was rent

From times great Chronicle, and hither sent.

Thus both the Church and Sunne together ran

Unto the farthest old meridian.

*How deare to me, O God, thy counsels are !*

*Who may with thee compare ?*

Much about one and the same time and place,

Both where and when the Church began her race,

Sinne did set out of Eastern *Babylon*,

And travell'd westward also : journeying on <sup>1</sup>

He chid the Church away, where e're he came,

Breaking her peace, and tainting her good name.

<sup>1</sup> Coasting on.—W.

At first he got to *Egypt*, and did sow  
 Gardens of gods, which ev'ry yeare did grow,  
 Fresh and fine deities. They were at great cost,  
 Who for a god clearely a sallet lost.  
 Ah, what a thing is man devoid of grace,  
 Adoring garlick with an humble face,  
 Begging his food of that which he may eat,  
 Starving the while he worshippeth his meat!  
 Who makes a root his god, how low is he,  
 If God and man be sever'd infinitely!  
 What wretchednesse can give him any room,  
 Whose house is foul, while he adores his broom?  
 None will beleeve this now, though money be  
 In us the same transplanted foolerie.  
 Thus Sinne in *Egypt* sneaked for a while;  
 His highest was an ox or crocodile,  
 And such poore<sup>1</sup> game. Thence he to *Greece*  
 doth passe,  
 And being craftier much then Goodnesse was,  
 He left behinde him garrisons of sinnes  
 To make good that which ev'ry day he winnes.  
 Here Sinne took heart, and for a garden-bed  
 Rich shrines and oracles he purchased:  
 He grew a gallant, and would needs foretell  
 As well what should befall, as what befell.  
 Nay, he became a poet, and would serve  
 His pills of sublimate in that conserve.  
 The world came both<sup>2</sup> with hands and purses full  
 To this great lotterie, and all would pull.  
 But all was glorious cheating, brave deceit,  
 Where some poore truths were shuffled for a bait

<sup>1</sup> Small.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Came in.—W.

To credit him, and to<sup>1</sup> discredit those  
 Who after him should braver truths disclose.  
 From *Greece* he went to *Rome*: and as before  
 He was a God, now he's an Emperour.  
*Nero* and others lodg'd him bravely there,  
 Put him in trust to rule the Romane sphere.  
 Glorie was his chief instrument of old:  
 Pleasure succeeded straight, when that grew cold.  
 Which soon was blown to such a mightie flame,  
 That though our Saviour did destroy the game,  
 Disparking oracles, and all their treasure,  
 Setting affliction<sup>2</sup> to encounter pleasure;  
 Yet did a rogue with hope of carnall joy  
 Cheat the most subtill nations. Who so coy,  
 So trimme,<sup>3</sup> as *Greece* and *Egypt*? yet their hearts  
 Are given over, for their curious arts,  
 To such Mahometan stupidities,  
 As the old heathen would deem prodigies.  
*How deare to me, O God, thy counsels are!*

*Who may with thee compare?*

Onely the West and *Rome* do keep them free  
 From this contagious infidelitie.  
 And this is all the Rock, whereof they boast,  
 As *Rome* will one day finde unto her cost.<sup>4</sup>  
 Sinne being not able to extirpate quite  
 The Churches here, bravely resolv'd one night  
 To be a Church-man too, and wear a Mitre:  
 The old debauched ruffian would turn writer.

<sup>1</sup> So.—W.    <sup>2</sup> Afflictions.—W.    <sup>3</sup> Spruse.—W.

<sup>4</sup> W. substitutes—

Traditions are accounts without our host.

And adds this couplet—

They who rely on them must reckon twice,  
 When written Truths shall censure man's device.

I saw him in his studie, where he sate  
 Busie in controversies sprung of late.  
 A gown and pen became him wondrous well :  
 His grave aspect had more of<sup>1</sup> heav'n than  
 hell :

Onely there was a handsome picture by,  
 To which he lent a corner of his eye.  
 As Sinne in *Greece* a Prophet was before,  
 And in old *Rome* a mightie Emperour ;  
 So now being Priest he plainly did professe  
 To make a jest of Christs three offices :  
 The rather since his scatter'd jugglings were  
 United now in one both time and sphere.  
 From *Egypt* he took pettie deities,  
 From *Greece* oracular infallibilities,  
 And from old *Rome* the libertie of pleasure,  
 By free dispensings<sup>2</sup> of the Churches treasure.  
 Then in memoriall of his ancient throne  
 He did surname his palace, *Babylon*.  
 Yet that he might the better gain all nations,  
 And make that name good by their transmigra-  
 tions ;

From all these places, but at divers times,  
 He took fine vizards to conceal his crimes :  
 From *Egypt* Anchorisme and retirednesse,  
 Learning from *Greece*, from old *Rome* stateli-  
 nesse :

And blending these he carri'd all mens eyes,  
 While Truth sat by, counting his victories :  
 Whereby he grew apace and scorn'd to use  
 Such force as once did captivate the Jews ;

<sup>1</sup> Was liker.—W.

<sup>2</sup> By dispensations.—W.

But did bewitch, and finely work each nation<sup>1</sup>  
 Into<sup>2</sup> a voluntarie transmigration.  
 All poste to *Rome*: Princes submit their necks  
 Either t' his publick foot or private tricks.  
 It did not fit his gravitie to stirre,  
 Nor his long journey, nor his gout and<sup>3</sup> furre.  
 Therefore he sent out able ministers,  
 Statesmen within, without doores cloisterers:  
 Who<sup>4</sup> without spear, or sword, or other drumme  
 Then what was in their tongue, did overcome;  
 And having conquer'd, did so strangely rule,  
 That the whole world did seem but the Popes  
 mule.

As new and old *Rome* did one Empire twist;  
 So both together are one Antichrist,  
 Yet with two faces, as their *Janus* was;  
 Being in this their old crackt looking-glasse.  
*How deare to me, O God, thy counsels are!*  
*Who may with thee compare?*

Thus Sinne triumphs in Western *Babylon*;  
 Yet not as Sinne, but as Religion.  
 Of his two thrones he made the latter best,  
 And to defray his journey from the east.  
 Old and new *Babylon* are to hell and night,  
 As is the moon and sunne to heav'n and  
 light.

<sup>1</sup> But did bewitch both kings and many a nation.  
 —W.

<sup>2</sup> Unto.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Or.—W.

<sup>4</sup> For this and the next three lines W. substitutes—  
 Whobrought his doctrinesand his deeds from Rome;  
 But when they were vnto y<sup>e</sup> Sorbon come,  
 The waight was such they left y<sup>e</sup> doctrines there,  
 Shipping y<sup>e</sup> vices onely for our sphere.



When th' one did set, the other did take place,  
 Confronting equally the law and grace.  
 They are hells land-marks, Satans double crest :  
 They are Sinnes nipples, feeding th' east and  
 west.

But as in vice the copie still exceeds  
 The pattern, but not so in vertuous deeds ;  
 So though Sinne made his latter seat the better,  
 The latter Church is to the first a debter.  
 The second Temple could not reach the first :  
 And the late reformation never durst  
 Compare with ancient times and purer yeares ;  
 But in the Jews and us deserveth tears.  
 Nay, it shall ev'ry yeare<sup>1</sup> decrease and fade ;  
 Till such a darknesse do the world invade  
 At Christs last coming, as his first did finde :  
 Yet must there such proportions<sup>2</sup> be assign'd  
 To these diminishings, as is between  
 The spacious world and *Jurie* to be seen.  
 Religion stands on tip-toe in our land,  
 Readie to passe to the *American* strand.<sup>3</sup>  
 When height of malice, and prodigious lusts,  
 Impudent sinning, witchcrafts, and distrusts  
 (The marks of future bane) shall fill our cup  
 Unto the brimme, and make our measure up ;  
 When *Sein* shall swallow *Tiber*, and the *Thames*  
 By letting in them both, pollutes her streams :  
 When *Italie* of us shall have her will,  
 And all her calender of sinnes fulfill ;

<sup>1</sup> Day.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Proportion.—W.

<sup>3</sup> On these two famous lines, which nearly prevented *The Temple* from being licensed, see Walton's *Life*, above, p. c.

Whereby one may fortell, what sinnes next yeare  
Shall both in *France* and *England* domineer :

Then shall Religion to *America* flee :

They have their times<sup>1</sup> of Gospel, ev'n as we.

My God, thou dost prepare for them a way

By carrying first their gold from them away :

For gold and grace did never yet agree :

Religion alwaies sides with povertie.

We think we rob them, but we think amisse :

We are more poore, and they more rich by this.

Thou wilt revenge their quarrell, making grace

To pay our debts, and leave our<sup>2</sup> ancient place

To go to them, while that which now their nation

But lends to<sup>3</sup> us, shall be our desolation.

Yet as the Church shall thither westward flie,

So Sinne shall trace and dog her instantly :

They have their period also and set times

Both for their vertuous actions and their crimes.

And where of old the Empire and the Arts

Usher'd the Gospel ever in mens hearts,

*Spain* hath done one ; when Arts perform the  
other,

The Church shall come, and Sinne the Church  
shall smother :

That when they haue accomplished the<sup>4</sup> round,

And met in th' east their first and ancient sound,

Judgement may meet them both and search  
them round.

Thus do both lights, as well in Church as Sunne,  
Light one another, and together runne.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Time.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Her.—W.

<sup>3</sup> Lendeth.—W.

<sup>4</sup> Their.—W.

<sup>5</sup> Like comick lovers ever one way runn.—W.

Thus also Sinne and Darknesse follow still  
The Church and Sunne with all their power  
and skill.<sup>1</sup>

But as the Sunne still goes both west and east ;  
So also did the Church by going west  
Still eastward go ; because it drew more neare  
To time and place, where judgement shall appeare.  
*How deare to me, O God, thy counsels are !*

*Who may with thee compare ?*

### 164. L'Envoy

**K**ING of glorie, King of peace,  
With the one make warre<sup>2</sup> to cease ;  
With the other blesse thy sheep,  
Thee to love, in thee to sleep.  
Let not Sinne devoure thy fold,  
Bragging that thy blood is cold,  
That thy death is also dead,  
While his conquests dayly spread ;  
That thy flesh hath lost his food,  
And thy Crosse is common wood.  
Choke him, let him say<sup>3</sup> no more,  
But reserve his breath in store,  
Till thy conquests and his fall  
Make his sighs to use it all,  
And then bargain with the winde  
To discharge what is behinde.  
*Blessed be God alone,*  
*Thrice blessed Three in One.*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thus also Sinne and Darknesse constantly  
Follow the Church and Sunn where ere they fly.—W.

<sup>2</sup> Warrs.    <sup>3</sup> Speak.    <sup>4</sup> W. omits these two lines.

[The six poems that follow are all taken from the Williams MS., where they stand interspersed among the others. (For the position which each of them occupies, see above, p. xxxi).]

## 165. The Holy Communion

O GRATIOUS Lord, how shall I know  
 Whether in these gifts Thou bee so  
 As Thou art everywhere?  
 Or rather so, as Thou alone  
 Tak'st all y<sup>e</sup> lodging, leaving none  
 For thy poore creature there.

First I am sure, whether bread stay,  
 Or whether Bread doe fly away,  
 Concerneth Bread, not mee;<sup>1</sup>  
 But y<sup>t</sup> both Thou and all Thy traine  
 Bee there, to Thy truth and my gaine  
 Concerneth mee and Thee.

And if in comming to Thy foes,  
 Thou dost come first to them, y<sup>t</sup> showes  
 The hast of Thy good will;

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hooker, *E. P.*, V. lxxvii. 12: "What these elements are in themselves it skilleth not, it is enough that to me which take them they are the body and blood of Christ;" and Andrewes, *Responsio ad Bellarm.* p. 13: Præsentiam credimus non minus quam vos veram: de modo præsentia nihil temere definimus, addo, nec anxie inquirimus.

Or if that Thou two stations makest,  
 In Bread and mee, the way Thou takest  
 Is more, but for mee still.

Then of this also I am sure,  
 That Thou didst all those pains endure  
 To abolish Sinn, not wheat ;  
 Creatures are good and have their place ;  
 Sinn onely w<sup>ch</sup> did all deface  
 Thou drivest from his seat.

I could beleeve an Impanation  
 At the rate of an Incarnation,  
 If Thou hadst dyde for Bread ;  
 But that w<sup>ch</sup> made my soule to dye,  
 My flesh and fleshly villany,  
 That allso made Thee dead.

That flesh is there mine eyes deny :  
 And what should flesh but flesh discry,  
 The noblest sence of five ?  
 If glorious bodies pass the sight,  
 Shall they be food and strength and might,  
 Even there where they deceive ?

Into my soule this cannot pass ;  
 Flesh (though exalted) keeps his grass,  
 And cannot turn to soule.  
 Bodyes and minds are different spheres ;  
 Nor can they change their bounds and meres,  
 But keep a constant pole.

This gift of all gifts is the best,  
 Thy flesh the least y<sup>t</sup> I request ;  
     Thou took'st that pledge from mee :  
 Give mee not that I had before,  
 Or give mee that so I have more ;  
     My God, give mee all Thee.

## 166. Love

**T**HOU art too hard for me in Love ;  
     There is no dealing w<sup>th</sup> Thee in that art,  
 That is Thy Masterpeece, I see.  
 When I contrive and plott to prove  
 Something that may be conquest on my part,  
     Thou still, O Lord, outstrippest mee.

Sometimes, when as I wash, I say,  
 And shrodely as I think, Lord wash my soule,  
 More spotted then my flesh can bee.  
 But then there comes into my way  
 Thy ancient baptism, w<sup>ch</sup> when I was foule  
     And knew it not, yet cleansed mee.

I took a time when Thou didst sleep,  
 Great waves of trouble combating my brest :  
 I thought it brave to praise Thee then ;  
 Yet then I found that Thou didst creep  
 Into my hart w<sup>th</sup> ioye, giving more rest  
     Then flesh did lend Thee back agen.

Let mee but once the conquest have  
 Vpon y<sup>e</sup> matter, twill Thy conquest prove :  
 If Thou subdue mortalitie,  
 Thou dost no more then doth y<sup>e</sup> grave ;  
 Whereas if I orecome Thee and Thy love,  
 Hell, Death, and Diuel come short of mee.

## 167. Trinitie Sunday

**H**E that is one  
 Is none ;  
 Two reacheth Thee  
 In some degree :  
 Nature and grace  
 W<sup>th</sup> glory may attaine thy face.  
 Steele and a flint strike fire ;  
 Witt and desire  
 Never to thee aspire,  
 Except life catch and hold those fast.  
 That w<sup>ch</sup> beleefe  
 Did not confess in y<sup>e</sup> first theefe  
 His fall can tell  
 From heaven through earth to hell.  
 Lett two of those alone  
 To them that fall,  
 Who God and saints and angels loose at last :  
 Hee that has one  
 Has all.

## 168. Even-song

THE day is spent, and hath his will on mee :  
 I and y<sup>e</sup> Sunn have runn our races :  
 I went y<sup>e</sup> slower, yet more paces ;  
 For I decay, not hee.

Lord, make my losses up, and sett mee free ;  
 That I, who cannot now by day  
 Look on his daring brightnes, may  
 Shine then more bright then hee.

If thou deferr this light, then shadow mee ;  
 Least that the night, earths gloomy shade,  
 Fouling her nest, my earth invade,  
 As if shades knew not thee.

But thou art light and darkness both together :  
 If that bee dark we cannot see ;  
 The sunn is darker than a tree,  
 And thou more dark then either.

Yet thou art not so dark since I know this  
 But that my darknes may touch thine ;  
 And hope, that may teach it to shine,  
 Since light thy darknes is.

O lett my soule, whose keyes I must deliver  
 Into the hands of senceles dreams  
 W<sup>ch</sup> know not thee, suck in thy beams  
 And wake w<sup>th</sup> thee for ever.



## 169. The Knell

**T**HE bell doth tolle  
 Lord, help thy servant whose perplexed soule  
 Doth wishly look  
 On either hand,  
 And sometimes offers, sometimes makes a stand,  
 Struggling on th' hook.

Now is the season  
 Now y<sup>e</sup> great combat of our flesh and reason  
 O help my God.  
 See, they breake in,  
 Disbanded humours, sorrows, troops of sinn  
 Each w<sup>th</sup> his rodd.

Lord make thy blood  
 Convert and colour all the other flood  
 And streams of grief,  
 That they may bee  
 Julips and cordials when wee call on thee  
 For some relief.

## 170. Perseverance

**M**Y God y<sup>e</sup> poore expressions of my Love,  
 W<sup>ch</sup> warme these lines and serve them  
 vp to thee  
 Are so, as for the present I did move  
 Or rather as thou movedst mee.

But what shall issue, whither these my words  
 Shall help another, but my iudgment bee ;  
 As a burst fouling-peece doth save y<sup>e</sup> birds  
 But kill the man, is seal'd w<sup>th</sup> thee.

For who can tell though thou hast dyde to winn  
 And wedd my soule in glorious paradise,  
 Whither my many crymes and vse of sinn  
 May yet forbid the banes and bliss ?

Onely my soule hangs on thy promisses  
 W<sup>th</sup> face and hands clinging vnto thy brest ;  
 Clinging and crying, crying w<sup>th</sup>out cease,  
 Thou art my rock, thou art my rest.

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